00093780

BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

Royal Asiatic Society.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 03 December, 2015

PRIVATE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

HORACE WALPOLE,

EARL OF ORFORD.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

1764—1775.

93780

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR RODWELL AND MARTIN, BOND-STREET;

AND COLBURN AND CO., CONDUIT-STREET.

1820.

A2 :6-3

00093780

CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 5, 1764.

It is over with us! — If I did not know your firmness, I would have prepared you by degrees; but you are a man, and can hear the worst at once. The duke of Cumberland[1] is dead. I have heard it but this instant. The duke of Newcastle was come to breakfast with me, and had pulled out a letter from lord Frederick, with a hopeless account of the poor duke of Devonshire. Ere I could read it, colonel Schutz called at the door and told my servant this fatal news! I know no more — it must be at Newmarket, and very sudden; for the duke of Newcastle had a letter from Hodgson, dated on Monday, which said the duke was perfectly well, and his gout gone: — yes, to

---

1 William duke of Cumberland, son of George the second.

be sure, into his head. Princess Amelia had endeavoured to prevent his going to Newmarket, having perceived great alteration in his speech, as the duke of Newcastle had. —— Well! it will not be.—Every thing fights against this country! Mr. Pitt must save it himself — or, what I do not know whether he will not like as well, share in overturning its liberty—if they will admit him; which I question now if they will be fools enough to do.

You see I write in despair. I am for the whole, but perfectly tranquil. We have acted with honour, and have nothing to reproach ourselves with. We cannot combat fate. We shall be left almost alone; but I think you will no more go with the torrent than I will. Could I have foreseen this tide of ill fortune, I would have done just as I have done; and my conduct shall show I am satisfied I have done right. For the rest, come what come may, I am perfectly prepared! and while there is a free spot of earth upon the globe, that shall be my country. I am sorry it will not be this, but to-morrow I shall be able to laugh as usual. What signifies what happens when one is seven-and-forty, as I am to-day?

"They tell me 'tis my birth-day"—but I will not go on with Antony, and say

——— "and I'll keep it
With double pomp of sadness."—

No; when they can smile, who ruin a great country, sure those who would have saved it may indulge themselves in that cheerfulness which conscious integrity bestows. I think I shall come to you next week; and since we have no longer any plan of operations to settle, we will look over the map of Europe, and fix upon a pleasant corner for our exile — for take notice, I do not design to fall upon my dagger, in hopes that some Mr. Addison a thousand years hence may write a dull tragedy about me. I will write my own story a little more cheerfully than he would; but I fear now I must not print it at my own press. Adieu! You was a philosopher before you had any occasion to be so: pray continue so; you have ample occasion!

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, October 13, 1764.

Lord John Cavendish has been so kind as to send me word of the duke of Devonshire's[1] legacy to you. You cannot doubt of the great joy this gives

---

[1] William, fourth duke of Devonshire. During his administration in Ireland Mr. Conway had been secretary of state there.

me; and yet it serves to aggravate the loss of so worthy a man! And when I feel it thus, I am sensible how much more it will add to your concern, instead of diminishing it. Yet do not wholly reflect on your misfortune. You might despise the acquisition of five thousand pounds simply; but when that sum is a public testimonial to your virtue, and bequeathed by a man so virtuous, it is a million. Measure it with the riches of those who have basely injured you, and it is still more! Why, it is glory, it is conscious innocence, it is satisfaction —it is affluence without guilt—Oh! the comfortable sound! It is a good name in the history of these corrupt days. There it will exist, when the wealth of your and their country's enemies will be wasted, or will be an indelible blemish on their descendants.

My heart is full, and yet I will say no more. My best loves to all your opulent family. Who says virtue is not rewarded in this world? It is rewarded by virtue, and it is persecuted by the bad: Can greater honour be paid to it?

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, October 27, 1764.

Dear Sir,

Though I am much concerned at not seeing you, I am more so at not hearing from you, as I fear your sore throat has proved more troublesome than you apprehended. Pray write me one line to tell me how you are.

I will not trouble you with more now, but to enclose a sheet, by which I hope you will approve the manner in which I have obeyed you.

Yours most faithfully.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1764.

I am glad you mentioned it: I would not have had you appear without your close mourning for the duke of Devonshire upon any account. I was once going to tell you of it, knowing your inaccuracy in such matters; but thought it still impossible you should be ignorant how necessary it is. Lord Strafford, who has a legacy of only 200*l.* wrote to consult lady Suffolk. She told him, for such a sum, which only implies a ring, it was sometimes not done; but yet advised him to mourn.

In your case it is indispensable; nor can you see any of his family without it. Besides, it is much better on such an occasion to over, than under do. I answer this paragraph first, because I am so earnest not to have you blamed.

Besides wishing to see you all, I have wanted exceedingly to come to you, having much to say to you; but I am confined here, that is, Mr. Chute is: he was seized with the gout last Wednesday se'nnight, the day he came hither to meet George Montagu, and this is the first day he has been out of his bed-chamber. I must therefore put off our meeting till Saturday, when you shall certainly find me in town.

We have a report here, but the authority bitter bad, that lord March is going to be married to * * * *. I don't believe it the less for our knowing nothing of it; for unless their daughter were breeding, and it were to save her character, neither * * * nor * * * would disclose a tittle about it. Yet in charity they should advertise it, that parents and relations, if it is so, may lock up all knives, ropes, laudanum, and rivers, lest it should occasion a violent mortality among his fair admirers.

I am charmed with an answer I have just read in the papers of a poor man in Bedlam, who was ill used by an apprentice because he would not tell him why he was confined there. The unhappy creature said at last, "Because God has

deprived me of a blessing which you never enjoyed." There never was any thing finer or more moving! Your sensibility will not be quite so much affected by a story I heard t'other day of sir Fletcher Norton. He has a mother.—yes, a mother: perhaps you thought, that, like that tender urchin Love,

> —— duris in cotibus *illum*
> Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
> Nec nostri generis puerum nec sanguinis edunt.

Well, Mrs. Rhodope lives in a mighty shabby hovel at Preston, which the dutiful and affectionate sir Fletcher began to think not suitable to the dignity of one who has the honour of being his parent. He cheapened a better, in which were two pictures which the proprietor valued at threescore pounds. The *attorney* insisted on having them for nothing, as fixtures—the landlord refused, the bargain was broken off, and the dowager madam Norton remains in her original hut. I could tell you another story which you would not dislike; but as it might hurt the person concerned, if it was known, I shall not send it by the post; but will tell it you when I see you. Adieu!

Yours most cordially.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Dear Sir,

I am heartily concerned for my disappointment, and more for the cause of it. Take care of yourself, and by no means venture catching cold. I shall be equally glad to see you on Tuesday; but I beg you not to come even then, if your throat is not perfectly cured.

Yours most sincerely.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, October 30, 1764.

Dear Sir,

I am rejoiced to hear you are well, but horridly vexed at my own negligence and oversight. Assure yourself I never wrote *procurer*, but *procureur*, leaving the original term, as I think one seldom gives a just idea by translating titles. If I *castrate* the whole half sheet, I will not leave it *procurer*.

I am obliged to go to London on Saturday for two or three days, but have no doubt of being back here before Thursday, 8th, and if I am, hope to see you for longer than a dinner. Thank you for your notices; I am sure, say what you will, I am still in your debt for a thousand obliging in-

stances of friendship; and in truth, am willing to be more so, for the communication of your MSS.

Yours most sincerely.

P. S. The enclosed trifle is only to fill up the packet.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 8, 1764.

I am much disappointed, I own, dear sir, at not seeing you: more so, as I fear it will be long before I shall, for I think of going to Paris early in February. I ought indeed to go directly, as the winter does not agree with me here. Without being positively ill, I am positively not well: about this time of year, I have little fevers every night, and pains in my breast and stomach, which bid me repair to a more flannel climate. These little complaints are already begun, and as soon as affairs will permit me, I mean to transport them southward.

I am sorry it is out of my power to make the addition you wish to Mr. Tuer's article: many of the following sheets are printed off, and there is no inserting any thing now, without shoving the whole text forward, which you see is impossible. You promised to bring me a portrait of him: as I shall have four or five new plates, I can get his head into one of them: will you send it as soon as

you can possibly to my house in Arlington-street; I will take great care of it, and return it to you safe.

I thank you much for your corrections, though they are too late for my next edition; it is printed to past the middle of the third volume.

Yours most sincerely.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

November 10, 1764.

SOH! madam, you expect to be thanked, because you have done a very obliging thing![1] But I won't thank you, and I won't be obliged. It is very hard one can't come into your house and commend any thing, but you must recollect it and send it after one! I will never dine in your house again; and when I do, I will like nothing; and when I do, I will commend nothing; and when I do, you shan't remember it. You are very grateful indeed to providence that gave you so good a memory, to stuff it with nothing but bills of fare of what every body likes to eat and drink! I wonder you are not ashamed — I wonder you are not ashamed! Do you think there is no such thing as gluttony of the memory? — You a Christian!

---

[1] Lady Hervey, it is supposed, had sent Mr. Walpole some potted pilchards.

A pretty account you will be able to give of yourself! — Your fine folks in France may call this friendship and attention, perhaps — but sure, if I was to go to the devil, it should be for thinking of nothing but myself, not of others from morning to night. I would send back your temptations; but, as I will not be obliged to you for them, verily I shall retain them to punish you, ingratitude being a proper chastisement for sinful friendliness.

Thine in the spirit,

PILCHARD WHITFIELD.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington-street, Dec. 16, 1764.

As I have not read in the papers that you died lately at Greatworth, in Northamptonshire, nor have met with any Montagu or Trevor in mourning, I conclude you are living: I send this, however, to inquire, and if you should happen to be departed, hope your executor will be so kind as to burn it. Though you do not seem to have the same curiosity about my existence, you may gather from my hand-writing that I am still in being; which being perhaps full as much as you want to know of me, I will trouble you with no farther particulars about myself — nay, nor about any body else; your curiosity seeming to be pretty

much the same about all the world. News there are certainly none; nobody is even dead, as the bishop of Carlisle told me to-day, which I repeat to you in general, though I apprehend in his own mind he meant no possessor of a better bishopric.

If you like to know the state of the town, here it is. In the first place, it is very empty; in the next, there are more diversions than the week will hold. A charming Italian opera, with no dances and no company, at least on Tuesdays; to supply which defect, the subscribers are to have a ball and supper; a plan that in my humble opinion will fill the Tuesdays and empty the Saturdays. At both playhouses are woful English operas, which however fill better than the Italian, patriotism being entirely confined to our ears; how long the sages of the law may leave us those I cannot say. Mrs. Cornelis, apprehending the future assembly at Almack's, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin, but Almack's room, which is to be ninety feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers, as easily as Moses's rod gobbled down those of the magicians. Well; but there are more joys, a dinner and assembly every Tuesday at the Austrian minister's; ditto on Thursdays at the Spaniard's; ditto on Wednesdays and Sundays at the French ambassador's; besides madame de Welderen's on Wednesdays, lady Harrington's Sundays, and occasional private mobs at my lady Northum-

berland's. Then for the mornings, there are levees and drawing-rooms without end. Not to mention the maccaroni-club, which has quite absorbed Arthur's, for you know old fools will hobble after young ones. Of all these pleasures, I prescribe myself a very small pittance, my dark corner in my own box at the opera, and now and then an ambassador, to keep my French going till my journey to Paris. Politics are gone to sleep, like a paroli at Pharaoh, though there is the finest tract lately published that ever was written, called an Inquiry into the doctrine of libels. It would warm your old Algernon blood; but for what any body cares, might as well have been written about the wars of York and Lancaster. The thing most in fashion is my edition of lord Herbert's life; people are mad after it, I believe because only two hundred were printed; and by the numbers that admire it, I am convinced that if I had kept his lordship's counsel, very few would have found out the absurdity of it. The caution, with which I hinted at its extravagance, has passed with several for approbation, and drawn on theirs. This is nothing new to me; it is when one laughs out at their idols that one angers people. I do not wonder now that sir Philip Sidney was the darling hero, when lord Herbert, who followed him so close and trod in his steps, is at this time of day within an ace of rivalling him. I wish I had let him; it was contradicting one of my own

maxims, which I hold to be very just; that it is idle to endeavour to cure the world of any folly, unless we could cure it of being foolish.

Tell me whether I am likely to see you before I go to Paris, which will be early in February. I hate you for being so indifferent about me. I live in the world, and yet love nothing; care a straw for nothing, but two or three old friends, that I have loved these thirty years. You have buried yourself with half a dozen parsons and squires, and yet never cast a thought upon those you have always lived with. You come to town for two months, grow tired in six weeks, hurry away, and then one hears no more of you till next winter. I don't want you to like the world, I like it no more than you; but I stay awhile in it, because while one sees it one laughs at it, but when one gives it up one grows angry with it; and I hold it much wiser to laugh than to be out of humour. You cannot imagine how much ill blood this perseverance has cured me of; I used to say to myself, "Lord! this person is so bad, that person is so bad, I hate them." I have now found out that they are all pretty much alike, and I hate nobody. Having never found you out, but for integrity and sincerity, I am much disposed to persist in a friendship with you, but if I am to be at all the pains of keeping it up, I shall imitate my neighbours (I don't mean those at next door, but in the scripture sense of neighbour, any body)

and say, "That is a very good man, but I don't care a farthing for him." Till I have taken my final resolution on that head, I am,

Yours most cordially.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Christmas-eve, 1764.

You are grown so good, and I delight so much in your letters when you please to write them, that though it is past midnight and I am to go out of town to-morrow morning, I must thank you.

I shall put your letter to Rheims into the foreign post with a proper penny, and it will go much safer and quicker than if I sent it to lord Hertford, for his letters lie very often till enough are assembled to compose a jolly caravan. I love your good brother John, as I always do, for keeping your birth-day; I who hate ceremonious customs, approve of what I know comes so much from the heart as all he and you do and say. The general surely need not ask leave to enclose letters to me.

There is neither news nor any body to make it but the clergy, who are all gaping after or about the Irish mitre, which your old antagonist has quitted. Keene has refused it, Newton hesitates, and they think will not accept it, Ewer pants for it, and many of the bench I believe do every thing

but pray for it. Goody Carlisle hopes for Worcester if it should be vacated, but I believe would not dislike to be *her Grace*.

This comes with your muff, my Anecdotes of Painting, the fine pamphlet on libels, and the Castle of Otranto, which came out to-day. All this will make some food for your fireside. Since you will not come and see me before I go, I hope not to be gone before you come, though I am not quite in charity with you about it. Oh, I had forgot; don't lend your lord Herbert, it will grow as dirty as the street; and as there are so few, and they have been so lent about, and so dirtied, the few clean copies will be very valuable. What signifies whether they read it or not? there will be a new fashion, or a new separation, or a new something or other, that will do just as well, before you can convey your copy to them; and seriously, if you lose it, I have not another to give you; and I would fain have you keep my editions together, as you have had the complete set. As I want to make you an economist of my books, I will inform you that this second set of anecdotes sells for three guineas. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. I send you a decent smallish muff, that you may put in your pocket, and it costs but fourteen shillings.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Feb. 19, 1765.

Your health and spirits and youth delight me; yet I think you make but a bad use of them, when you destine them to a triste house in a country, solitude. If you were condemned to retirement, it would be fortunate to have spirits to support it; but great vivacity is not a cause for making it one's option.

Why waste your sweetness on the desert air? at least, why bestow so little of your cheerfulness on your friends? I do not wish you to parade your rubicundity and grey hairs through the mobs and assemblies of London; I should think you bestowed them as ill as on Greatworth; but you might find a few rational creatures here, who are heartily tired of what are called our pleasures, and who would be glad to have you in their chimney corner. There you might have found *me* any time this fortnight; I have been dying of the worst and longest cold I ever had in my days, and have been blooded, and taken James's powder to no purpose. I look almost like the skeleton that Frederick found in the oratory: my only comfort was, that I should have owed my death to the long day in the House of Commons, and have perished with our liberties; but I think I am getting the better of my martyrdom, and shall live to

see you; nay, I shall not be gone to Paris. As I design that journey for the term of my figuring in the world, I would fain wind up my politics too, and quit all public ties together. As I am not old yet, and have an excellent though delicate constitution, I may promise myself some agreeable years, if I could detach myself from all connexions, but with a very few persons that I value. Oh, with what joy I could bid adieu to loving and hating! to crowds, public places, great dinners, visits; and above all, to the House of Commons; but pray mind, when *I* retire, it shall only be to London and Strawberry-hill — in London one can live as one will, and at Strawberry I will live as I will. *A propos*, my good old tenant Franklin is dead, and I am in possession of his cottage, which will be a delightfully additional plaything at Strawberry. I shall be violently tempted to stick in a few cypresses and lilacs there, before I go to Paris. I don't know a jot of news: I have been a perfect hermit this fortnight, and buried in Runic poetry and Danish wars. In short, I have been deep in a late history of Denmark, written by one Mallet, a Frenchman, a sensible man, but I cannot say he has the art of making a very tiresome subject agreeable. There are six volumes, and I am stuck fast in the fourth.

Lord Byron's trial I hear is to be in May. If you are curious about it, I can secure you a

ticket for lord Lincoln's gallery. The Antiquarian Society have got goody Carlisle for their president, and I suppose she will sit upon a Saxon chalkstone till the return of king Arthur. Adieu.

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Feb. 28, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

As you do not deal with newspapers, nor trouble yourselves with occurrences of modern times, you may perhaps conclude from what I have told you, and from my silence, that I am in France. This will tell you that I am not; though I have been long thinking of it, and still intend it, though not exactly yet. My silence I must lay on this uncertainty, and from having been much out of order above a month with a very bad cold and cough, for which I am come hither to try change of air. Your brother Apthorpe, who was so good as to call upon me about a fortnight ago in town, found me too hoarse to speak to him. We both asked one another the same question — news of you?

You have, I hope, got rid of all trouble from your impertinent neighbour, and reverted to the tranquillity you love.

I have for some time had the pictures from Dr. Cock, and shall have the one engraved, that I conclude your ancestor, though there seems no very accurate marks to specify it.

I have lately had an accession to my territory here, by the death of good old Franklin, to whom I had given for his life the lease of the cottage and garden cross the road. Besides a little pleasure in planting and in crowding it with flowers, I intend to make, what I am sure you are antiquarian enough to approve, a bower, though your friends the abbots did not indulge in such retreats; at least not under that appellation: but though we love the same ages, you must excuse worldly me for preferring the romantic scenes of antiquity. If you will tell me how to send it, and are partial enough to me to read a profane work in the style of former centuries, I shall convey to you a little story-book, which I published some time ago, though not boldly with my own name: but it has succeeded so well, that I do not any longer *entirely* keep the secret. Does the title, The Castle of Otranto, tempt you?

I shall be glad to hear you are well and happy.

Ever yours.

P. S. Pray direct your answer to Arlington-street.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, March 9, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD time to write but a short note with the Castle of Otranto, as your messenger called on me at four o'clock, as I was going to dine abroad. Your partiality to me and Strawberry have, I hope, inclined you to excuse the wildness of the story. You will even have found some traits to put you in mind of this place. When you read of the picture quitting its panel, did not you recollect the portrait of lord Falkland, all in white, in my gallery? Shall I even confess to you, what was the origin of this romance? I waked one morning, in the beginning of last June, from a dream, of which, all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle, (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story,) and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down, and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it—add, that I was very glad to think of any thing, rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening, I wrote from the time I had drunk my

tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking, in the middle of a paragraph. You will laugh at my earnestness; but if I have amused you, by retracing with any fidelity the manners of ancient days, I am content, and give you leave to think me as idle as you please.

You are, as you have long been to me, exceedingly kind, and I should, with great satisfaction, embrace your offer of visiting the solitude of Blechely, though my cold is in a manner gone, and my cough quite, if I was at liberty: but as I am preparing for my fresh journey, and have forty businesses upon my hands, and can only now and then purloin a day, or half a day, to come hither. You know I am not cordially disposed to *your* French journey, which is much more serious, as it is to be much more lasting. However, though I may suffer by your absence, I would not dissuade what may suit your inclination and circumstances. One thing, however, has struck me, which I must mention, though it would depend on a circumstance, that would give me the most real concern. It was suggested to me by that real fondness I have for your MSS., for your kindness about which I feel the utmost gratitude. You would not, I think, leave them behind you: and are you aware of the danger you would run,

if you settled entirely in France? Do you know that the king of France is heir to all strangers who die in his dominions, by what they call the *Droit d'Aubaine?* Sometimes by great interest and favour, persons have obtained a remission of this right in their life-time: and yet that, even that, has not secured their effects from being embezzled. Old lady Sandwich had obtained this remission, and yet, though she left every thing to the present lord, her grandson, a man for whose rank one should have thought they would have had regard, the king's officers forced themselves into her house, after her death, and plundered. You see, if you go, I shall expect to have your MSS. deposited with me — Seriously, you must leave them in safe custody behind you.

Lord Essex's trial is printed with the state trials. In return for your obliging offer, I can acquaint you with a delightful publication of this winter, A Collection of Old Ballads and Poetry, in three volumes, many from Pepys's Collection at Cambridge. There were three such published between thirty and forty years ago, but very carelessly, and wanting many in this set: indeed there were others, of a looser sort, which the present editor, who is a clergyman, thought it decent to omit.

When you go into Cheshire, and upon your ramble, may I trouble you with a commission? but about which you must promise me not to go a

step out of your way. Mr. Bateman has got a cloister at Old Windsor, furnished with ancient wooden chairs, most of them triangular, but all of various patterns, and carved and turned in the most uncouth and whimsical forms. He picked them up one by one, for two, three, five, or six shillings a piece from different farm-houses in Herefordshire. I have long envied and coveted them. There may be such in poor cottages, in so neighbouring a county as Cheshire. I should not grudge any expense for purchase or carriage; and should be glad even of a couple such for my cloister here. When you are copying inscriptions in a church-yard in any village, think of me, and step into the first cottage you see — but don't take further trouble than that.

I long to know what your bundle of MSS. from Cheshire contains.

My bower is determined, but not at all what it is to be. Though I write romances, I cannot tell how to build all that belongs to them. Madame Dunois, in the Fairy Tales, used to *tapestry* them with *jonquils;* but as that furniture will not last above a fortnight in the year, I shall prefer something more huckaback. I have decided that the outside shall be of *treillage,* which, however, I shall not commence, till I have again seen some of old Louis's old fashioned *Galanteries,* at Versailles. Rosamond's bower, you, and I, and Tom Hearne know, was a labyrinth: but as my ter-

ritory will admit of a very short clew, I lay aside all thoughts of a mazy habitation: though a bower is very different from an arbour, and must have more chambers than one. In short, I both know, and don't know, what it should be. I am almost afraid I must go and read Spenser, and wade through his allegories, and drawling stanzas, to get at a picture. But, good night! you see how one gossips, when one is alone, and at quiet on one's own dunghill! — Well! it may be trifling; yet it is such trifling as ambition never is happy enough to know! ambition orders palaces, but it is content that chats for a page or two over a bower.

Yours ever.

To Monsieur ELIE de BEAUMONT.

[With the Castle of Otranto.]

Strawberry-hill, March 18, 1765.

Sir,

When I had the honour of seeing you here, I believe I told you that I had written a novel, in which I was flattered to find that I had touched an effusion of the heart in a manner similar to a passage in the charming letters of the marquis de

Roselle.[1] I have since that time published my little story, but was so diffident of its merit, that I gave it as a translation from the Italian. Still I should not have ventured to offer it to so great a mistress of the passions as madame de Beaumont, if the approbation of London, that is, of a country to which she and you, sir, are so good as to be partial, had not encouraged me to send it to you. After I have talked of the passions, and the natural effusions of the heart, how will you be surprised to find a narrative of the most improbable and absurd adventures! How will you be amazed to hear that a country of whose good sense you have an opinion should have applauded so wild a tale! But you must remember, sir, that whatever good sense we have, we are not yet in any light chained down to precepts and inviolable laws. All that Aristotle or his superior commentators, your authors, have taught us, has not yet subdued us to regularity: we still prefer the extravagant beauties of Shakspeare and Milton to the cold and well-disciplined merit of Addison, and even to the sober and correct march of Pope. Nay, it was but t'other day that we were transported to hear Churchill rave in numbers less

[1] A French novel written by madame de Beaumont, wife of Monsieur Elie de Beaumont.

chastised than Dryden's, but still in numbers like Dryden's. You will not, I hope, think I apply these mighty names to my own case with any vanity, when it is only their enormities that I quote, and that in defence, not of myself, but of my countrymen, who have had good-humour enough to approve the visionary scenes and actors in the Castle of Otranto.

To tell you the truth, it was not so much my intention to recall the exploded marvels of ancient romance, as to blend the wonderful of old stories with the natural of modern novels. The world is apt to wear out any plan whatever; and if the marquis de Roselle had not appeared, I should have been inclined to say, that that species *had* been exhausted. Madame de Beaumont must forgive me if I add that Richardson had, to me at least, made that kind of writing insupportable. I thought the *nodus* was become *dignus vindice,* and that a god, at least a ghost, was absolutely necessary to frighten us out of too much senses. When I had so wicked a design, no wonder if the execution was answerable. If I make you laugh, for I cannot flatter myself that I shall make you cry, I shall be content; at least I shall be satisfied, till I have the pleasure of seeing you, with putting you in mind of, sir,

Your most devoted humble servant.

P. S. The passage I alluded to in the beginning

of my letter is where Matilda owns her passion to Hippolita.—I mention it, as I fear so unequal a similitude would not strike madame de Beaumont.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, April 5, 1765.

I SENT you two letters t'other day from your kin, and might as well have written then as now, for I have nothing to tell you. Mr. Chute has quitted his bed to-day the first time for above five weeks, but is still swathed like a mummy. He was near relapsing, for old Mildmay, whose lungs, and memory, and tongue, will never wear out, talked to him t'other night from eight till half an hour after ten on the poor bill; but he has been more comfortable with lord Dacre and me this evening.

I have read the Siege of Calais, and dislike it extremely, though there are fine lines, but the conduct is woful. The outrageous applause it has received at Paris was certainly political, and intended to spur up their spirit and animosity against us, their good, merciful, and forgiving allies. They will have no occasion for this ardour; they may smite one cheek, and we shall turn t'other.

Though I have little to say, it is worth while to write, only to tell you two *bon-mots* of Quin, to

that turn-coat hypocrite infidel, bishop Warburton. That saucy priest was haranguing at Bath in behalf of prerogative: Quin said, "Pray, my lord, spare me, you are not acquainted with my principles, I am a republican; and perhaps I even think that the execution of Charles the first might be justified." — "Aye!" said Warburton, "by what law?" Quin replied, "*By all the laws he had left them.*" The bishop would have got off upon judgments, and bade the player remember that all the regicides came to violent ends; a lie, but no matter. "*I would not advise your lordship,*" said Quin, "*to make use of that inference, for if I am not mistaken, that was the case of the twelve apostles.*" There was great wit *ad hominem* in the latter reply, but I think the former equal to any thing I ever heard. It is the sum of the whole controversy couched in eight monosyllables, and comprehends at once the king's guilt and the justice of punishing it. The more one examines it, the finer it proves. One can say nothing after it; so good night.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, May 26, 1765.

If one of the one hundred events, and one hundredth part of the one hundred thousand reports that have passed, and been spread in this last month, have reached your solitary hill, you must be surprised at not a single word from me during that period. The number of events is my excuse. Though mine is the pen of a pretty ready writer, I could not keep pace with the revolutions of each day, each hour. I had not time to begin the narrative, much less to finish it: no, I must keep the whole to tell you at once, or to read it to you, for I think I shall write the history, which, let me tell you, Buckinger himself could not have crowded into a nut-shell.

For your part, you will be content, though the house of Montagu has not made an advantageous figure in this political warfare, yet it is crowned with victory, and laurels you know compensate for every scar. You went out of town frightened out of your senses at the giant prerogative: alack! he is grown so tame, that, as you said of our earthquake, you may stroke him. The regency bill, not quite calculated with that intent, has produced four regents, king Bedford, king Grenville, king Halifax, and king Twitcher. Lord Holland is turned out, and Stuart Mackenzie.

Charles Townshend is paymaster, and lord Bute annihilated; and all done without the help of the Whigs. You love to guess what one is going to say; now you may guess what I am not going to say. Your newspapers perhaps have given you a long roll of opposition names, who were coming into place, and so all the world thought; but the wind turned quite round, and left them on the strand, and just where they were, except in opposition, which is declared to be at an end. Enigma as all this may sound, the key would open it all to you in the twinkling of an administration. In the mean time, we have family reconciliations without end. The king and the duke of Cumberland have been shut up together day and night; lord Temple and George Grenville are sworn brothers; well, but Mr. Pitt, where is he? In the clouds, for aught I know, in one of which he may descend like the kings of Bantam, and take quiet possession of the throne again.

As a thorough-bass to these squabbles, we have had an insurrection, and a siege. Bedford-house, though garrisoned by horse and foot-guards, was on the point of being taken. The besieged are in their turn triumphant; and if any body now was to publish *Droit le Duc*, I do not think the House of Lords would censure his book. Indeed the regents may do what they please, and turn out whom they will; I see nothing to resist them.

Lord Bute will not easily be tempted to rebel when the last struggle has cost him so dear.

I am sorry for some of my friends, to whom I wished more fortune. For myself, I am but just where I should have been, had they succeeded. It is satisfaction enough to me to be delivered from politics, which you know I have long detested. When I was tranquil enough to write Castles of Otranto, in the midst of grave nonsense, and foolish councils of war, I am not likely to disturb myself with the diversions of the court, where I am not connected with a soul. As it has proved to be the interest of the present ministers, however contrary to their former views, to lower the crown, they will scarce be in a hurry to aggrandize it again. That will satisfy you, and I you know am satisfied if I have any thing to laugh at—'tis a lucky age for a man who is so easily contented.

The poor Chute has had another relapse, but is out of bed again. I am thinking of my journey to France, but as Mr. Conway has a mind I should wait for him, I don't know whether it will take place before the autumn. I will by no means release you from your promise of making me a visit here before I go.

Poor Mr. Bentley, I doubt, is under the greatest difficulties of any body. His poem, which he modestly delivered over to immortality, must be cut

and turned, for lord Halifax and lord Bute cannot sit in the same canto together; then the horns and hoofs, that he had bestowed on lord Temple, must be pared away, and beams of glory distributed over his whole person. 'Tis a dangerous thing to write political panegyrics or satires; it draws the unhappy bard into a thousand scrapes and contradictions. The edifices and inscriptions at Stowe should be a lesson not to erect monuments to the living. I will not place an ossuarium in my garden for my cat, before her bones are ready to be placed in it. I hold contradictions to be as essential to the definition of a political man, as any visible or featherless quality can be to man in general. Good night.

Yours ever.

28th.

I SHALL send this by the coach, so whatever comes with it, is only to make bundle. Here are some lines that came into my head yesterday in the post-chaise, as I was reading in the Annual Register an account of a fountain-tree in one of the Canary Islands, which never dies, and supplies the inhabitants with water. I don't warrant the longevity, though the hypostatic union of a fountain may eternize the tree.

'In climes adust, where rivers never flow,
Where constant suns repel approaching snow,

How nature's various and inventive hand
Can pour unheard-of moisture o'er the land!
Immortal plants she bids on rocks arise,
And from the dropping branches streams supplies.
The thirsty native sucks the falling shower,
Nor asks for juicy fruit, or blooming flower;
But haply doubts, when travellers maintain,
That Europe's forests melt not into rain.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 10, 1765.
Eleven at night.

I AM just come out of the garden in the most oriental of all evenings, and from breathing odours beyond those of Araby. The acacias, which the Arabians have the sense to worship, are covered with blossoms, the honeysuckles dangle from every tree in festoons, the seringas are thickets of sweets, and the new-cut hay in the field tempers the balmy gales with simple freshness, while a thousand sky-rockets launched into the air at Ranelagh or Marybone illuminate the scene, and give it an air of Haroun Alraschid's paradise. I was not quite so content by day-light, some foreigners dined here, and though they admired our verdure, it mortified me by its brownness; we have not had a drop of rain this month to cool the tip of our daisies. My company was

lady Lyttleton, lady Schaub, a madame de Juliac from the Pyreneans, very handsome, not a girl, and of lady Schaub's mould; the comte de Caraman, nephew of madame de Mirepoix, a monsieur de Claussonnette, and general Schouallow, the favourite of the late czarina; absolute favourite for a dozen years, without making an enemy. In truth, he is very amicable, humble, and modest. Had he been ambitious, he might have mounted the throne: as he was not, you may imagine they have plucked his plumes a good deal. There is a little air of melancholy about him, and if I am not mistaken, some secret wishes for the fall of the present empress, which, if it were civil to suppose, I could heartily join with him in hoping for. As we have still liberty enough left to dazzle a Russian, he seems charmed with England, and perhaps liked even this place the more as belonging to the son of one that, like himself, had been prime minister. If he has no more ambition left than I have, he must taste the felicity of being a private man. What has lord Bute gained but the knowledge of how many ungrateful sycophants favour and power can create?

If you have received the parcel that I consigned to Richard Brown for you, you will have found an explanation of my long silence. Thank you for being alarmed for my health.

The day after to-morrow I go to Park-place for four or five days, and soon after to Goodwood.

My French journey is still in suspense; lord Hertford talks of coming over for a fortnight; perhaps I may go back with him; but I have determined nothing yet, till I see farther into the present chase, that somehow or other I may take my leave of politics for ever; for can any thing be so wearisome as politics on the account of others? Good night; shall I not see you here?

Yours ever.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Strawberry-hill, June 11, 1765.

I AM almost as much ashamed, madam, to plead the true cause of my faults towards your ladyship, as to have been guilty of any neglect. It is scandalous at my age to have been carried backwards and forwards to balls and suppers and parties by very young people, as I was all last week. My resolutions of growing old and staid are admirable: I wake with a sober plan, and intend to pass the day with my friends—then comes the duke of Richmond, and hurries me down to Whitehall to dinner—then the duchess of Grafton sends for me to loo in Upper Grosvenor-street—before I can get thither, I am begged to step to Kensington to give Mrs. Anne Pitt my opinion about a bow window—after the loo, I

am to march back to Whitehall to supper—and after that, am to walk with miss Pelham on the terrass till two in the morning, because it is moonlight and her chair is not come. All this does not help my morning laziness; and by the time I have breakfasted, fed my birds and my squirrels, and dressed, there is an auction ready. —In short, madam, this was my life last week, and is I think every week, with the addition of forty episodes.—Yet, ridiculous as it is, I send it your ladyship, because I had rather you should laugh at me than be angry. I cannot offend you in intention, but I fear my sins of omission are equal to many a good Christian's. Pray forgive me. I really will begin to be between forty and fifty by the time I am fourscore: and I truly believe I shall bring my resolutions within compass; for I have not chalked out any particular business that will take me above forty years more; so that, if I do not get acquainted with the grandchildren of all the present age, I shall lead a quiet sober life yet before I die.

As Mr. Bateman's is the kingdom of flowers, I must not wish to send you any; else, madam, I could load waggons with acacias, honeysuckles, and seringas. Madame de Juliac, who dined here yesterday, owned that the climate and odours equalled Languedoc. I fear the want of rain made the turf put her in mind of it too. Monsieur de Caraman entered into the Gothic spirit

of the place, and really seemed pleased, which was more than I expected; for, between you and me, madam, our friends the French have seldom eyes for any thing they have not been used to see all their lives.

I beg my warmest compliments to your host and lord Ilchester. I wish your ladyship all pleasure and health, and am, notwithstanding my idleness,

Your most faithful
and devoted humble servant.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Saturday night.

I MUST scrawl a line to you, though with the utmost difficulty, for I am in my bed; but I see they have foolishly put it into the Chronicle that I am dangerously ill; and as I know you take in that paper, and are one of the very, very few, of whose tenderness and friendship I have not the smallest doubt, I give myself pain, rather than let you feel a moment's unnecessarily. It is true, I have had a terrible attack of the gout in my stomach, head, and both feet, but have truly never been in danger any more than one must be in such a situation. My head and stomach are perfectly well; my feet far from it. I have kept

my room since this day se'nnight, and my bed these three days, but hope to get up to-morrow. You know my writing and my veracity, and that I would not deceive you. As to my person, it will not be so easy to reconnoitre it, for I question whether any of it will remain; it was easy to annihilate so airy a substance. Adieu.

Yours most truly.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Wednesday noon, July 3, 1765.

The footing part of my dance with my shocking partner the gout is almost over. I had little pain there this last night, and got, at twice, about three hours sleep; but whenever I waked found my head very bad, which Mr. Graham thinks gouty too. The fever is still very high: but the same sage is of opinion, with my lady Londonderry, that if it was a fever from death, I should die; but as it is only a fever from the gout, I shall live. I think so too, and hope that, like the duke and duchess of Marlborough, they are so inseparable, that when one goes t'other will.

Tell lady Ailesbury, I fear it will be long before I shall be able to compass all your terraces again.

The weather is very hot, and I have the com-

fort of a window open all day. I have got a bushel of roses too, and a new scarlet nightingale, which does *not* sing Nancy Dawson from morning to night. Perhaps you think all these poor pleasures; but you are ignorant what a provocative the gout is, and what charms it can bestow on a moment's amusement! Oh! it beats all the refinements of a Roman sensualist. It has made even my watch a darling plaything; I strike it as often as a child does. Then the disorder of my sleep diverts me when I am awake. I dreamt that I went to see madame de Bentheim at Paris, and that she had the prettiest palace in the world, built like a pavilion, of yellow laced with blue; that I made love to her daughter, whom I called *mademoiselle bleüe et jaune*, and thought it very clever.

My next reverie was very serious, and lasted half an hour after I was awake; which you will perhaps think a little light-headed, and so do I. I thought Mr. Pitt had had a conference with madame de Bentheim, and granted all her demands. I rung for Louis at six in the morning, and wanted to get up and inform myself of what had been kept so secret from me. You must know, that all these visions of madame de Bentheim flowed from George Selwyn telling me last night, that she had carried most of her points, and was returning. What stuff I tell you!—But, alas! I have nothing better to do, sitting

on my bed, and wishing to forget how brightly the sun shines, when I cannot be at Strawberry.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 11, 1765.

You are so good, I must write you a few lines, and you will excuse my not writing many, my posture is so uncomfortable, lying on a couch by the side of my bed, and writing on the bed. I have in this manner been what they call out of bed for two days, but I mend very slowly, and get no strength in my feet at all; however, I must have patience.

Thank you for your kind offer; but, my dear sir, you can do me no good but what you always do me, in coming to see me. I should hope that would be before I go to France, whither I certainly go the beginning of September, if not sooner. The great and happy change, happy I hope for this country, is actually begun. The duke of Bedford, George Grenville, and the two secretaries are discarded. Lord Rockingham is first lord of the treasury, Dowdswell chancellor of the exchequer, the duke of Grafton and Mr. Conway secretaries of state. You need not wish me joy, for I know you do. There is a good deal more to come, and what is better, regulation

of general warrants, and undoing of at least some of the mischiefs these —— have been committing; some, indeed, is past recovery! I long to talk it all over with you; though it is hard that when I *may* write what I will, I am not able.

The poor Chute is relapsed again, and we are no comfort to one another but by messages. An offer of Ireland was sent to lord Hertford last night *from his brother's office*. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 28, 1765.

THE less one is disposed, if one has any sense, to talk of one's self to people that inquire only out of compliment, and do not listen to the answer, the more satisfaction one feels in indulging a self complacency, by sighing to those that really sympathize with our griefs. Do not think it is pain that makes me give this low-spirited air to my letter. No, it is the prospect of what is to come, not the sensation of what is passing, that affects me. The loss of youth is melancholy enough; but to enter into old age through the gate of infirmity, most disheartening. My health and spirits made me take but slight notice of

the transition, and under the persuasion of temperance being a talisman, I marched boldly on towards the descent of the hill, knowing I must fall at last, but not suspecting that I should stumble by the way. This confession explains the mortification I feel. A month's confinement to one, who never kept his bed a day, is a stinging lesson, and has humbled my insolence to almost indifference. Judge then how little I interest myself about public events. I know nothing of them since I came hither, where I had not only the disappointment of not growing better, but a bad return in one of my feet, so that I am still wrapped up and upon a couch. It was the more unlucky, as lord Hertford is come to England for a very few days. He has offered to come to me, but as I then should see him only for some minutes, I propose being carried to town to-morrow. It will be so long before I can expect to be able to travel, that my French journey will certainly not take place so soon as I intended, and if lord Hertford goes to Ireland, I shall be still more fluctuating; for though the duke and duchess of Richmond will replace them at Paris, and are as eager to have me with them, I have had so many more years heaped upon me within this month, that I have not the conscience to trouble young people, when I can no longer be as juvenile as they are. Indeed I shall think myself decrepit, till I can again saunter

into the garden in my slippers and without my hat in all weathers, a point I am determined to regain if possible, for even this experience cannot make me resign my temperance and my hardiness. I am tired of the world, its politics, its pursuits, and its pleasures, but it will cost me some struggles before I submit to be tender and careful. Christ! can I ever stoop to the regimen of old age? I do not wish to dress up a withered person, nor drag it about to public places; but to sit in one's room, clothed warmly, expecting visits from folks I don't wish to see, and tended and flattered by relations impatient for one's death! let the gout do its worst as expeditiously as it can; it would be more welcome in my stomach than in my limbs. I am not made to bear a course of nonsense and advice, but must play the fool in my own way to the last, alone with all my heart, if I cannot be with the very few I wish to see; but to depend for comfort on others, who would be no comfort to me, this surely is not a state to be preferred to death, and nobody can have truly enjoyed the advantages of youth, health, and spirits, who is content to exist without the two last, which alone bear any resemblance to the first.

You see how difficult it is to conquer my proud spirit: low and weak as I am, I think my resolution and perseverance will get the better, and that I shall still be a gay shadow;

at least I will impose any severity upon myself, rather than humour the gout, and sink into that indulgence with which most people treat it. Bodily liberty is as dear to me as mental, and I would as soon flatter any other tyrant as the gout, my whiggism extending as much to my health as to my principles, and being as willing to part with life, when I cannot preserve it, as your uncle Algernon when his freedom was at stake. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, August 23, 1765.

As I know that when you love people, you love them, I feel for the concern that the death of lady Bab Montagu[1] will give you. Though you have long lived out of the way of seeing her, you are not a man to forget by absence, or all your friends would have still more reason to complain of your retirement. Your solitude prevents your filling up the places of those that are gone. In the world, new acquaintances slide into our habits, but you keep so strict a separation be-

[1] Sister of the earl of Halifax.

tween your old friends and new faces, that the loss of any of the former must be more sensible to you than to most people. I heartily condole with you, and yet I must make you smile. The second miss Jefferies was to go to a ball yesterday at Hampton-court with lady Sophia Thomas's daughters. The news came, and your aunt Cosby said the girl must not go to it. The poor child then cried in earnest. Lady Sophia went to intercede for her, and found her grandmother at back-gammon, who would hear no entreaties. Lady Sophia represented that miss Jefferies was but a second cousin, and could not have been acquainted. "Oh! madam if there is no tenderness left in the world — cinq ace — sir, you are to throw."

We have a strange story come from London. Lord Fortescue was dead suddenly; there was a great mob about his house in Grosvenor-square, and a buz that my lady had thrown up the sash and cried murder, and that he then shot himself. How true all this I don't know; at least it is not so false as if it was in the newspapers. However, these sultry summers do not suit English heads: this last month puts even the month of November's nose out of joint for self murders. If it was not for the queen the peerage would be extinct: she has given us another duke.

My two months are up, and yet I recover my

feet very slowly. I have crawled once round my garden, but it sent me to my couch for the rest of the day. This duration of weakness makes me very impatient, as I wish much to be at Paris before the fine season is quite gone. This will probably be the last time I shall travel *to finish my education*, and I should be glad to look once more at their gardens and villas; nay, churches and palaces are but uncomfortable sights in cold weather, and I have much more curiosity for their habitations than their company. They have scarce a man, or a woman of note, that one wants to see; and for their authors, their style is grown so dull in imitation of us, they are *si philosophes, si geometres, si moraux*, that I certainly should not cross the sea in search of an ennui, that I can have in such perfection at home. However, the change of scene is my chief inducement, and to get out of politics. There is no going through another course of patriotism in your cousin Sandwich and George Grenville. I think of setting out by the middle of September; have I any chance of seeing you here before that? Won't you come and commission me to offer up your devotions to *Notre Dame de Livry? or chez nos filles de Sainte Marie.* If I don't make haste, the reformation in France will demolish half that I want to see. I tremble for the *Val de Grace and St. Cyr.* The devil take Luther for putting it into

the heads of his methodists to pull down churches! I believe in twenty years there will not be a convent left in Europe but this at Strawberry. I wished for you to-day; Mr. Chute and Cowslade dined here; the day was divine; the sun gleamed down into the chapel in all the glory of popery; the gallery was all radiance; we drank our coffee on the bench under the great ash, the verdure was delicious; our tea in the Holbein room, by which a thousand chaises and barges passed; and I shewed them my new cottage and garden over the way, which they had never seen, and with which they were enchanted. It is so retired, so modest, and yet so cheerful and trim, that I expect you to fall in love with it. I intend to bring it a handful of *treillage* and *agremens* from Paris; for being cross the road, and quite detached, it is to have nothing Gothic about it, nor pretend to call cousins with the mansion-house.

I know no more of the big world at London, than if I had not a relation in the ministry. To be free from pain and politics is such a relief to me, that I enjoy my little comforts and amusements here beyond expression. No mortal ever entered the gate of ambition with such transport as I took leave of them all at the threshold. Oh! if my lord Temple knew what pleasures he could create for himself at Stowe, he would not harass a shattered carcass, and sigh to be insolent at St.

James's! For my part, I say with the bastard in king John, though with a little more reverence, and only as touching his ambition,

> Oh! old sir Robert, father, on my knee
> I give heaven thanks I was not like to thee.

Adieu;

Yours most cordially.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Saturday, Aug. 31, 1765, Strawberry-hill.

I THOUGHT it would happen so; that I should not see you before I left England! Indeed, I may as well give you quite up, for every year reduces our intercourse. I am prepared, because it must happen, if I live, to see my friends drop off; but my mind was not turned to see them entirely separated from me while they live. This is very uncomfortable, but so are many things!—well! I will go and try to forget you all—all! God knows *the all* that I have left to forget is small enough; but the warm heart, that gave me affections, is not so easily laid aside. If I could divest myself of that, I should not I think find much cause for friendship remaining; you, against whom I have no complaint, but that you satisfy yourself with

loving me without any desire of seeing me, are one of the very last that I wish to preserve; but I will say no more on a subject that my heart is too full of.

I shall set out on Monday se'nnight, and force myself to believe that I am glad to go, and yet this will be my chief joy, for I promise myself little pleasure in arriving. Can you think me boy enough to be fond of a new world at my time of life? If I did not hate the world I know, I I should not seek another. My greatest amusement will be in reviving old ideas. The memory of what made impressions on one's youth is ten times dearer than any new pleasure can be. I shall probably write to you often, for I am not disposed to communicate myself to any thing that I have not known these thirty years. My mind is such a compound from the vast variety that I have seen, acted, pursued, that it would cost me too much pains to be intelligible to young persons, if I had a mind to open myself to them. They certainly do not desire I should. You like my gossipping *to* you, though you so seldom gossip *with* me. The trifles that amuse my mind, are the only points I value now. I have seen the vanity of every thing serious, and the falsehood of every thing that pretended to be serious. I go to see French plays and buy French china, not to know their ministers, to look into their government, or think of the interests of nations—in

short, unlike most people that are growing old, I am convinced that nothing is charming but what appeared important in one's youth, which afterwards passes for follies. Oh, but those follies were sincere; if the pursuits of age are so, they are sincere alone to self interest. Thus I think, and have no other care but not to think aloud. I would not have respectable youth think me an old fool. For the old knaves, they may suppose me one of their number if they please; I shall not be so—but neither the one nor the other shall know what I am. I have done with them all, shall amuse myself as well as I can, and think as little as I can; a pretty hard task for an active mind!

Direct your letters to Arlington-street, whence Favre will take care to convey them to me. I leave him to manage all my affairs, and take no soul but Louis. I am glad I don't know your Mrs. Anne; her partiality would make me love her; and it is entirely incompatible with my present system to leave even a postern door open to any feeling, which would steal in, if I did not double bolt every avenue.

If you send me any parcel to Arlington-street before Monday se'nnight I will take great care of it. Many English books I conclude are to be bought at Paris. I am sure Richardson's works are, for they have stupified the whole French nation: I will not answer for our best authors. You may send me your list, and if I do not find

them, I can send you word, and you may convey them to me by Favre's means, who will know of messengers, &c. coming to Paris.

I have fixed no precise time for my absence. My wish is to like it enough to stay till February, which may happen, if I can support the first launching into new society. I know four or five very agreeable and sensible people there, as the Guerchys, madame de Mirepoix, madame de Boufflers, and lady Mary Chabot. These intimately, besides the duc de Nivernois, and several others that have been here. Then the Richmonds will follow me in a fortnight or three weeks, and their house will be a sort of home. I actually go into it at first, till I can suit myself with an apartment, but I shall take care to quit it before they come, for though they are in a manner my children, I do not intend to adopt the rest of my countrymen; nor, when I quit the best company here, to live in the worst there; such are young travelling boys, and what is still worse, old travelling boys, governors.

Adieu; remember you have defrauded me of this summer; I will be amply repaid the next, so make your arrangements accordingly.

Yours ever.

To the EARL of STRAFFORD.

Arlington-street, September 3, 1765.

My dear Lord,

I cannot quit a country where I leave any thing that I honour so much as your lordship and lady Strafford, without taking a sort of leave of you. I shall set out for Paris on Monday next the 9th, and shall be happy if I can execute any commission for you there.

A journey to Paris sounds youthful and healthy. I have certainly mended much this last week, though with no pretensions to a recovery of youth. Half the view of my journey is to re-establish my health—the other half, to wash my hands of politics, which I have long determined to do whenever a change should happen. I would not abandon my friends while they were martyrs; but now they have gained their crown of glory, they are well able to shift for themselves; and it was no part of my compact to go to that heaven, St. James's, with them. Unless I dislike Paris very much, I shall stay some time; but I make no declarations, lest I should be soon tired of it, and come back again. At first I must like it, for lady Mary Coke will be there, as if by assignation. The countesses of Carlisle and Berkeley too, I hear, will set up their staves there for some time; but as my heart is faithful to lady M * * *, they

would not charm me if they were forty times more disposed to it.

The emperor is dead—but so are all the Maximilians and Leopolds his predecessors, and with no more influence on the present state of things. The empress dowager queen will still be master—unless she marries an Irishman, as I wish with all my soul she may.

The duke[1] and duchess of Richmond will follow me in about a fortnight: lord and lady George Lennox go with them; and sir Charles Bunbury and lady Sarah are to be at Paris too for some time: so the English court there will be very juvenile and blooming. This set is rather younger than the dowagers with whom I pass so much of my summers and autumns; but this is to be my last sally into the world; and when I return, I intend to be as sober as my cat, and purr quietly in my own chimney corner.

Adieu, my dear lord! May every happiness attend you both, and may I pass some agreeable days next summer with you at Wentworth-castle!

Your most devoted and faithful servant.

---

[1] Appointed ambassador to Paris.

To the Right Hon. LADY HERVEY.

Arlington-street, September 3, 1765.

The trouble your ladyship has given yourself so immediately, makes me, as I always am, ashamed of putting you to any. There is no persuading you to oblige moderately. Do you know, madam, that I shall tremble to deliver the letters you have been so good as to send me? If you have said half so much of me, as you are so partial as to think of me, I shall be undone. Limited as I know myself, and hampered in bad French, how shall I keep up to any character at all? Madame d'Aiguillon and madame Geoffrin will never believe that I am the true messenger; but will conclude that I have picked Mr. Walpole's portmanteau's pocket. I wish only to present myself to them as one devoted to your ladyship: that character I am sure I can support in any language, and it is the one to which they would pay the most regard —— Well! I don't care, madam — it is your reputation is at stake more than mine; and if they find me a simpleton that don't know how to express myself, it will all fall upon you at last. If your ladyship will risk that, I will, if you please, thank you for a letter to madame d'Egmont too: I long to know your friends, though at the hazard of their knowing yours. Would I were a

jolly old man, to match, at least, in that respect, your *jolly* old woman![1] — But, alas! I am nothing but a poor worn-out-rag, and fear, when I come to Paris, that I shall be forced to pretend that I have had the gout in my understanding. My spirits, such as they are, will not bear translating; and I don't know whether I shall not find it the wisest part I can take to fling myself into geometry or commerce, or agriculture, which the French now esteem, don't understand, and think we do. They took George Selwyn for a poet, and a judge of planting and dancing; why may not I pass for a learned man and a philosopher? If the worst comes to the worst, I will admire Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison; and declare that I have not a friend in the world that is not like my lord Edward Bomston, though I never knew a character like it in my days, and hope I never shall; nor do I think Rousseau need to have gone so far out of his way to paint a disagreeable Englishman.

If you think, madam, this sally is not very favourable to the country I am going to; recollect, that all I object to them is their quitting their own agreeable style, to take up the worst of ours. Heaven knows, we are unpleasing enough: but in the first place they don't understand us; and in the next, if they did, so much the worse for them.

---

[1] The duchesse d'Aiguillon.

What have they gained by leaving Moliere, Boileau, Corneille, Racine, La Rochefoucault, Crebillon, Marivaux, Voltaire, &c. No nation can be another nation. We have been clumsily copying them for these hundred years, and are not we grown wonderfully like them? Come, madam, you like what I like of them; I am going thither, and you have no aversion to going thither—but own the truth; had not we both rather go thither fourscore years ago? Had you rather be acquainted with the charming madame Scarron, or the canting madame de Maintenon? with Louis XIV. when the Montespan governed him, or when Pere le Tellier? I am very glad when folks go to heaven, though it is after another body's fashion; but I wish to converse with them when they are themselves. I abominate a conqueror; but I do not think he makes the world much compensation, by cutting the throats of his protestant subjects to atone for the massacres caused by his ambition.

The result of all this dissertation, madam, for I don't know how to call it a letter, is, that I shall look for Paris in the midst of Paris, and shall think more of the French that have been than the French that are, except of a few of your friends and mine. Those I know, I admire and honour, and I am sure I will trust to your ladyship's taste for the others; and if they had no other merit, I can but like those that will talk to me of you. They will find more sentiment in me on that chapter, than

they can miss parts; and I flatter myself that the one will atone for the other.

I am, madam, your ladyship's
most obliged and most obedient
humble servant.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 5, 1765.

Dear Sir,

You cannot think how agreeable your letter was to me, and how luckily it was timed. I thought you in Cheshire, and did not know how to direct: I now sit down to answer it instantly.

I have been extremely ill indeed with the gout all over; in head, stomach, both feet, both wrists, and both shoulders. I kept my bed a fortnight in the most sultry part of this summer; and for nine weeks could not say I was recovered. Though I am still weak, and very soon tired with the least walk, I am in other respects quite well. However, to promote my entire re-establishment, I shall set out for Paris next Monday. Thus your letter came luckily. To hear you talk of going thither too, made it most agreeable. Why should you not advance your journey? Why defer it till the winter is coming on? It would make me quite happy to visit churches and convents with

you: but they are not comfortable in cold weather. Do, I beseech you, follow me as soon as possible. The thought of your being there at the same time makes me much more pleased with my journey; you will not, I hope, like it the less: and if our meeting there should tempt you to stay longer, it will make me still more happy.

If, in the mean time, I can be of any use to you, I shall be glad; either in taking a lodging for you, or any thing else. Let me know, and direct to me in Arlington-street, whence my servant will convey it to me. Tell me above all things that you will set out sooner.

If I have any money left when I return, and can find a place for it, I shall be very glad to purchase the ebony cabinet you mention, and will make it a visit with you next summer if you please—but first let us go to Paris. I don't give up my passion for ebony: but since the destruction of the Jesuits, I hear one can pick up so many of their spoils, that I am impatient for the opportunity.

I must finish, as I have so much business before I set out: but I must repeat, how lucky the arrival of your letter was, how glad I was to hear of your intended journey, and how much I wish it may take place directly. I will only add that the court goes to Fontainbleau the last week in September, or first in October, and therefore it is the

season in the world for seeing all Versailles quietly, and at one's ease. Adieu! dear sir,

Yours most cordially.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Amiens, Wednesday, Sept. 11, 1765.

Beau Cousin,

I have had a very prosperous journey till just at entering this city. I escaped a prince of Nassau at Dover, and sickness at sea, though the voyage lasted seven hours and a half. I have recovered my strength surprisingly in the time; though almost famished for want of clean victuals, and comfortable tea and bread and butter. Half a mile from hence I met a coach and four with an equipage of French, and a lady in pea-green and silver, a smart hat and feather, and two *suivantes*. My reason told me it was the archbishop's concubine; but luckily my heart whispered that it was lady * * * * * *. I jumped out of my chaise—yes, jumped, as Mrs. Nugent said of herself, fell on my knees, and said my first *Ave Maria, gratiâ plena;* We just shot a few politics flying—heard that madame de Mirepoix had toasted me t'other day in tea—shook hands, forgot to weep, and parted; she to the hereditary princess, I to this

inn, where is actually resident the duchess of Douglas. We are not likely to have any intercourse, or I would declare myself a Hamilton.[1]

I find this country wonderfully enriched since I saw it four-and-twenty years ago. Boulogne is grown quite a plump smug town, with a number of new houses. The worst villages are tight, and wooden shoes have disappeared. Mr. Pitt and the city of London may fancy what they will, but France will not come a-begging to the Mansion-house this year or two. In truth, I impute this air of opulence a little to ourselves. The crumbs that fall from the chaises of the swarms of English that visit Paris, must have contributed to fatten this province. It is plain I must have little to do when I turn my hand to calculating: but here is my observation. From Boulogne to Paris it will cost me near ten guineas; but then consider, I travel alone, and carry Louis most part of the way in the chaise with me. *Nous autres milords Anglois* are not often so frugal. Your brother,[2] last year, had ninety-nine English to dinner on the king's birth-day. How many of them do you think dropped so little as ten guineas on this road? In short, there are the

---

[1] The memorable cause between the houses of Douglas and Hamilton was then pending.

[2] Francis earl of Hertford, then ambassador at Paris.

seeds of a calculation for you; and if you will water them with a torrent of words, they will produce such a dissertation, that you will be able to vie with George Grenville next session in plans of national œconomy—only be sure not to tax travelling till I come back, loaded with purchases; nor, till then, propagate my ideas. It will be time enough for me to be thrifty of the nation's money, when I have spent all my own.

Clermont, 12th.

While they are getting my dinner, I continue my journal. The duchess of Douglas (for English are generally the most extraordinary persons that we meet with even out of England) left Amiens before me, on her way home. You will not guess what she carries with her—Oh! nothing that will hurt our manufactures; nor what George Grenville himself would seize. One of her servants died at Paris; she had him embalmed, and the body is tied before her chaise:—a droll way of being chief mourner!

For a French absurdity, I have observed that along the great roads they plant walnut-trees, but strip them up for firing. It is like the owl that bit off the feet of mice, that they might lie still and fatten.

At the foot of this hill is an old-fashioned chateau belonging to the duke of Fitz-James, with a *parc en quincunx* and clipped hedges. We saw

him walking in his waistcoat and riband, very well powdered; a figure like Guerchy. I cannot say his seat rivals Goodwood or Euston.[3] I shall lie at Chantilly to-night, for I did not set out till ten this morning—not because I could not, as you will suspect, get up sooner—but because all the horses in the country have attended the queen to Nancy.[4] Besides, I have a little underplot of seeing Chantilly and St. Denis in my way; which you know one could not do in the dark to-night, nor in winter, if I return then.

Hotel de feue madame l'Ambassadrice d'Angleterre,
Sept. 13, 7 o'clock.

I AM just arrived. My lady Hertford is not at home, and lady Anne[5] will not come out of her burrow: so I have just time to finish this before madame returns; and Brian sets out to-night and will carry it. I find I shall have a great deal to say: formerly I observed nothing, and now re-

---

[3] The duc de Fitz-James's father, mareschal Berwick, was a natural son of James II. Mr. Walpole therefore compares his country seat with those of the dukes of Richmond and Grafton, similar descendants from his brother Charles II.

[4] Stanislaus king of Poland, father to the queen of Louis XV. lived at Nancy.

[5] Lady Anne Seymour Conway, afterwards married to the earl of Drogheda.

mark every thing minutely. I have already fallen in love with twenty things, and in hate with forty. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, September 14, 1765.

I AM but two days old here, madam, and I doubt I wish I was really so, and had my life to begin, to live it here. You see how just I am, and ready to make *amende honorable* to your ladyship. Yet I have seen very little. My lady Hertford has cut me to pieces, and thrown me into a caldron with taylors, periwig-makers, snuff-box-wrights, milliners, &c. which really took up but little time; and I am come out quite new, with every thing but youth. The journey recovered me with magic expedition. My strength, if mine could ever be called strength, is returned; and the gout going off in a minuet step. I will say nothing of my spirits, which are indecently juvenile, and not less improper for my age than for the country where I am; which, if you will give me leave to say it, has a thought too much gravity. I don't venture to laugh or talk nonsense, but in English.

Madame Geoffrin came to town but last night,

and is not visible on Sundays; but I hope to deliver your ladyship's letter and pacquet to-morrow. Mesdames d'Aiguillon, d'Egmont, and Chabot, and the duc de Nivernois are all in the country. Madame de Boufflers is at L'Isle Adam, whither my lady Hertford is gone to-night to sup, for the first time, being no longer chained down to the incivility of an ambassadress. She returns after supper; an irregularity that frightens me, who have not yet got rid of all my barbarisms. There is one, alas! I never shall get over — the dirt of this country: it is melancholy after the purity of Strawberry! The narrowness of the streets, trees clipped to resemble brooms, and planted on pedestals of chalk, and a few other points, do not edify me. The French opera, which I have heard to-night, disgusted me as much as ever; and the more for being followed by the Devin de Village, which shows that they can sing without cracking the drum of one's ear. The scenes and dances are delightful: the Italian comedy charming. Then I am in love with *treillage* and fountains, and will prove it at Strawberry. Chantilly is so exactly what it was when I saw it above twenty years ago, that I recollected the very position of monsieur le Duc's chair and the gallery. The latter gave me the first idea of mine; but, presumption apart, mine is a thousand times prettier. I gave my lord Herbert's compliments to the

statue of his friend the constable;[1] and, waiting some time for the concierge, I called out, *Où est Vatel?*[2]

In short, madam, being as tired as one can be of one's own country, I don't say whether that is much or little, I find myself wonderfully disposed to like this—Indeed I wish I could wash it. Madame de Guerchy is all goodness to me; but that is not new. I have already been prevented by great civilities from madame de Bentheim and my old friend madame de Mirepoix; but am not likely to see the latter much, who is grown a most particular favourite of the king, and seldom from him. The dauphin is ill, and thought in a very bad way. I hope he will live, lest the theatres should be shut up. Your ladyship knows I never trouble my head about royalties, farther than it affects my own interest.—In truth, the way that princes affect my interest is not the common way.

I have not yet tapped the chapter of baubles, being desirous of making my revenues maintain me here as long as possible. It will be time

---

[1] The constable de Montmorency.

[2] The maître d'hotel, who during the visit which Louis XIV. made to the grand Condé at Chantilly, put an end to his existence because he feared the sea-fish would not arrive in time for one day's repast.

enough to return to my parliament when I want money.

Mr. Hume, that is, *the Mode*, asked much about your ladyship. I have seen madame de Monaco, and think her very handsome, and extremely pleasing. The younger madame d'Egmont, I hear, disputes the palm with her; and madame de Brionne is not left without partisans. The nymphs of the theatres are *laides à faire peur*, which at my age is a piece of luck, like going into a shop of curiosities, and finding nothing to tempt one to throw away one's money.

There are several English here, whether I will or not. I certainly did not come for them, and shall connect with them as little as possible. The few I value, I hope sometimes to hear of. Your ladyship guesses how far that wish extends. Consider too, madam, that one of my unworthinesses is washed and done away, by the confession I made in the beginning of my letter.

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most faithful and devoted humble servant.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Paris, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 1765.

Dear Sir,

I have this moment received your letter, and as a courier is just setting out, I had rather take the opportunity of writing to you a short letter, than defer it for a longer.

I had a very good passage, and pleasant journey, and find myself surprisingly recovered for the time. Thank you for the good news you tell me of your coming: it gives me great joy.

To the end of this week I shall be in lord Hertford's house: so have not yet got a lodging: but when I do, you will easily find me. I have no banker, but credit on a merchant who is a private friend of lord Hertford: consequently I cannot give you credit on him: but you shall have the use of my credit, which will be the same thing; and we can settle our accounts together. I brought about 100*l.* with me, as I would advise you to do. Guineas you may change into Louis's, or French crowns at Calais and Boulogne; and even small bank bills will be taken here. In any shape I will assist you. Be careful on the road. My portmanteau, with part of my linen, was stolen from before my chaise at noon, while I went to see Chantilly. If you stir out of your room, lock the

door of it in the inn, or leave your man in it. If you arrive near the time you propose, you will find me here, and I hope much longer.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Sept. 22, 1765.

The concern I felt at not seeing you before I left England, might make me express myself warmly, but I assure you it was nothing but concern, nor was mixed with a grain of pouting. I knew some of your reasons, and guessed others. The latter grieve me heartily; but I advise you to do as I do: when I meet with ingratitude, I take a short leave both of it and its host. Formerly I used to look out for indemnification somewhere else; but having lived long enough to learn, that the reparation generally proved a second evil of the same sort, I am content now to skin over such wounds with amusements, which at least leave no scars. It is true amusements do not always amuse when we bid them. I find it so here; nothing strikes me; every thing I do is indifferent to me. I like the people very well, and their way of life very well; but as neither were my object, I should not much care if they were any other people, or

it was any other way of life. I am out of England, and my purpose is answered.

Nothing can be more obliging than the reception I meet with every where. It may not be more sincere (and why should it?) than our cold and bare civility; but it is better dressed, and looks natural; one asks no more. I have begun to sup in French houses, and as lady Hertford has left Paris to-day, shall increase my intimacies. There are swarms of English here, but most of them are going, to my great satisfaction. As the greatest part are very young, they can no more be entertaining to me than I to them, and it certainly was not my countrymen that I came to live with. Suppers please me extremely; I love to rise and breakfast late, and to trifle away the day as I like. There are sights enough to answer that end, and shops you know are an endless field for me. The city appears much worse to me than I thought I remembered it. The French music as shocking as I knew it was. The French stage is fallen off, though in the only part I have seen Le Kain I admire him extremely. He is very ugly and ill made, and yet has an heroic dignity which Garrick wants, and great fire. The Dumenil I have not seen yet, but shall in a day or two. It is a mortification that I cannot compare her with the Clairon, who has left the stage. Grandval I saw through a whole play without suspecting it was he. Alas! four-and-twenty years

make strange havock with us mortals! You cannot imagine how this struck me! The Italian comedy, now united with their *opera comique*, is their most perfect diversion; but alas! harlequin, my dear favourite harlequin, my passion, makes me more melancholy than cheerful. Instead of laughing, I sit silently reflecting how every thing loses charms when one's own youth does not lend it gilding! When we are divested of that eagerness and illusion, with which our youth presents objects to us, we are but the *caput mortuum* of pleasure.

Grave as these ideas are they do not unfit me for French company. The present tone is serious enough in conscience. Unluckily the subjects of their conversation are duller to me than my own thoughts, which may be tinged with melancholy reflections, but I doubt from my constitution will never be insipid. The French affect philosophy, literature, and free-thinking; the first never did, and never will possess me; of the two others I have long been tired. Free-thinking is for one's self, surely not for society; besides one has settled one's way of thinking, or knows it cannot be settled, and for others I do not see why there is not as much bigotry in attempting conversions from any religion as to it. I dined to-day with a dozen sçavants, and though all the servants were waiting, the conversation was much more unrestrained, even on the Old Testament, than I

would suffer at my own table in England if a single footman was present. For literature, it is very amusing when one has nothing else to do. I think it rather pedantic in society; tiresome when displayed professedly; and besides in this country one is sure it is only the fashion of the day. Their taste in it is worst of all: could one believe that when they read our authors, Richardson and Mr. Hume should be their favourites? The latter is treated here with perfect veneration. His history, so falsified in many points, so partial in as many, so very unequal in its parts, is thought the standard of writing.

In their dress and equipages they are grown very simple. We English are living upon their old gods and goddesses; I roll about in a chariot decorated with Cupids, and look like the grandfather of Adonis.

Of their parliaments and clergy I hear a good deal and attend very little: I cannot take up any history in the middle, and was too sick of politics at home to enter into them here. In short, I have done with the world, and live in it rather than in a desert, like you. Few men can bear absolute retirement, and we English worst of all. We grow so humoursome, so obstinate, and capricious, and so prejudiced, that it requires a fund of good-nature like yours not to grow morose. Company keeps our rind from growing too coarse and rough; and though at my return I design not

to mix in public, I do not intend to be quite a recluse. My absence will put it in my power to take up or drop as much as I please. Adieu; I shall inquire about your commission of books, but having been arrived but ten days, have not yet had time. Need I say, no I need not, that nobody can be more affectionately yours than

---

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, Oct. 3, 1765.

STILL I have seen neither madame d'Egmont nor the duchess d'Aiguillon, who are in the country; but the latter comes to Paris to-morrow. Madame Chabot I called on last night. She was not at home, but the hotel de Carnavalet[1] was; and I stopped on purpose to say an Ave Maria before it. It is a very singular building, not at all in the French style, and looks like an *ex voto* raised to her honour by some of her foreign votaries. I don't think her honoured half enough in her own country. I shall burn a little incense before your cardinal's heart,[2] madam, *à votre intention.*

I have been with madame Geoffrin several

---

1 Madame de Sévigné's residence in Paris.

2 The cardinal de Richelieu's heart at the Sorbonne.

times, and think she has one of the best understandings I ever met, and more knowledge of the world. I may be charmed with the French, but your ladyship must not expect that they will fall in love with me. Without affecting to lower myself, the disadvantage of speaking a language worse than any idiot one meets, is insurmountable: the silliest Frenchman is eloquent to me, and leaves me embarrassed and obscure. I could name twenty other reasons, if this one was not sufficient. As it is, my own defects are the sole cause of my not liking Paris entirely: the constraint I am under from not being perfectly master of their language, and from being so much in the dark, as one necessarily must be, on half the subjects of their conversation, prevents my enjoying that ease for which their society is calculated. I am much amused, but not comfortable.

The duc de Nivernois is extremely good to me; he inquired much after your ladyship. So does colonel Drumgold. The latter complains; but both of them, especially the duc, seem better than when in England. I met the duchesse de Cossé this evening at madame Geoffrin's. She is pretty, with a great resemblance to her father; lively and good-humoured, not genteel.

Yesterday I went through all my presentations at Versailles. 'Tis very convenient to gobble up a whole royal family in an hour's time, instead of being sacrificed one week at Leicester-house,

another in Grosvenor-street, a third in Cavendish-square, &c. &c. &c. *La Reine* is *le plus grand roi du monde*,[3] and talked much to me, and would have said more if I would have let her; but I was awkward, and shrunk back into the crowd. None of the rest spoke to me. The king is still much handsomer than his pictures, and has great sweetness in his countenance, instead of that *farouche* look which they give him. The mesdames are not beauties, and yet have something Bourbon in their faces. The dauphiness I approve the least of all: with nothing good-humoured in her countenance, she has a look and accent that made me dread lest I should be invited to a private party at loo with her.[4] The poor dauphin is ghastly, and perishing before one's eyes.

Fortune bestowed upon me a much more curious sight than a set of princes; the wild beast of the Gevaudan, which is killed, and actually in the queen's anti-chamber. It is a thought less than a leviathan and the beast in the Revelations, and has not half so many wings and eyes and talons as I believe they have, or will have some time or

---

[3] Madame de Sevigné thus expresses herself of Louis XIV. after his having taken much notice of her at Versailles. See her letters.

[4] He means, that she had a resemblance to the late princess Amelia.

other; this being possessed but of two eyes, four feet, and no wings at all. It is as like a wolf as a commissary in the late war, except, notwithstanding all the stories, that it has not devoured near so many persons. In short, madam, now it is dead and come, a wolf it certainly was, and not more above the common size than Mrs. C * * * * is. It has left a dowager and four young princes.

Mr. Stanley, who I hope will trouble himself with this, has been most exceedingly kind and obliging to me. I wish that, instead of my being so much in your ladyship's debt, you were a little in mine, and then I would beg you to thank him for me. Well, but as it is, why should not you, madam? He will be charmed to be so paid; and you will not dislike to please him. In short, I would fain have him know my gratitude; and it is hearing it in the most agreeable way, if expressed by your ladyship.

I am, madam, your most obliged and obedient humble servant.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Paris, Oct. 3, 1765.

I DON'T know where you are, nor when I am likely to hear of you. I write at random, and, as I talk, the first thing that comes into my pen.

I am, as you certainly conclude, much more amused than pleased. At a certain time of life, sights and new objects may entertain one, but new people cannot find any place in one's affection. New faces with some name or other belonging to them, catch my attention for a minute — I cannot say many preserve it. Five or six of the women that I have seen already, are very sensible. The men are in general much inferior, and not even agreeable. They sent us their best, I believe, at first, the duc de Nivernois. Their authors, who by the way are every where, are worse than their own writings, which I don't mean as a compliment to either. In general, the style of conversation is solemn, pedantic, and seldom animated, but by a dispute. I was expressing my aversion to disputes: Mr. Hume, who very gratefully admires the tone of Paris, having never known any other tone, said with great surprise, "Why, what do you like, if you hate both disputes and whisk?"

What strikes me the most upon the whole is, the total difference of manners between them and us, from the greatest object to the least. There is not the smallest similitude in the twenty-four hours. It is obvious in every trifle. Servants carry their lady's train, and put her into her coach with their hat on. They walk about the streets in the rain with umbrellas to avoid putting on their hats; driving themselves in open chaises in the country without hats, in the rain too, and yet

often wear them in a chariot in Paris when it does not rain. The very footmen are powdered from the break of day, and yet wait behind their master, as I saw the duc of Praslin's do, with a red pocket handkerchief about their necks. Versailles, like every thing else, is a mixture of parade and poverty, and in every instance exhibits something most dissonant from our manners. In the colonnades, upon the staircases, nay in the antichambers of the royal family, there are people selling all sorts of wares. While we were waiting in the dauphin's sumptuous bed-chamber, till his dressing-room door should be opened, two fellows were sweeping it, and dancing about in sabots to rub the floor.

You perceive that I have been presented. The queen took great notice of me; none of the rest said a syllable. You are let into the king's bed-chamber just as he has put on his shirt; he dresses and talks good-humouredly to a few, glares at strangers, goes to mass, to dinner, and a-hunting. The good old queen, who is like lady Primrose in the face, and queen Caroline in the immensity of her cap, is at her dressing-table, attended by two or three old ladies, who are languishing to be in Abraham's bosom, as the only man's bosom to whom they can hope for admittance. Thence you go to the dauphin, for all is done in an hour. He scarce stays a minute; indeed, poor creature, he is a ghost, and cannot possibly last three months. The dauphiness is in her bed-chamber,

but dressed and standing; looks cross, is not civil, and has the true Westphalian grace and accents. The four mesdames, who are clumsy plump old wenches, with a bad likeness to their father, stand in a bed-chamber in a row, with black cloaks and knotting bags, looking good-humoured, not knowing what to say, and wriggling as if they wanted to make water. This ceremony too is very short: then you are carried to the dauphin's three boys, who you may be sure only bow and stare. The duke of Berry looks weak and weak-eyed: the count de Provence is a fine boy; the count d'Artois well enough. The whole concludes with seeing the dauphin's little girl dine, who is as round and fat as a pudding.

In the queen's anti-chamber we foreigners and the foreign ministers were shown the famous beast of the Gevaudan, just arrived, and covered with a cloth, which two chasseurs lifted up. It is an absolute wolf, but uncommonly large, and the expression of agony and fierceness remains strongly imprinted on its dead jaws.

I dined at the duc of Praslin's with four-and-twenty ambassadors and envoys, who never go but on Tuesdays to court. He does the honours sadly, and I believe nothing else well, looking important and empty. The duc de Choiseul's face, which is quite the reverse of gravity, does not promise much more. His wife is gentle, pretty, and very agreeable. The duchess of Pras-

lin, jolly, red-faced, looking very vulgar, and being very attentive and civil. I saw the duc de Richelieu in waiting, who is pale, except his nose, which is red, much wrinkled, and exactly a remnant of that age which produced general Churchill, Wilkes the player, the duke of Argyle, &c. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, Oct. 6, 1765.

I AM glad to find you grow just, and that you do conceive at last, that I could do better than stay in England for politics. *Tenez, mon enfant,* as the duchesse de la Ferté said to madame Staal;[1] *comme il n'y a que moi au monde qui aie toujours raison,* I will be very reasonable; and as you have made this concession to me, who knew I was in the right, I will not expect you to answer all my *reasonable* letters. If you send a bullying letter to the king of Spain,[2] or to *chose,* my neighbour here,[3]

---

[1] See Memoires de madame de Staal (the first authoress of that name), published with the rest of her works in three small volumes.

[2] Mr. Conway was now secretary of state for the foreign department.

[3] The king of France, Louis XV.

I will consider them as written to myself, and substract so much from your bill — Nay, I will accept a line from lady Ailesbury now and then in part of payment. I shall continue to write as the wind sets in my pen; and do own my babble does not demand much reply.

For so reasonable a person as I am, I have changed my mind very often about this country. The first five days I was in violent spirits — then came a dismal cloud of whisk and literature, and I could not bear it. At present I begin, very *Englishly* indeed, to establish a right to my own way. I laugh, and talk nonsense, and make them hear me. There are two or three houses where I go quite at my ease, am never asked to touch a card, nor hold dissertations. Nay, I don't pay homage to their authors. Every woman has one or two planted in her house, and God knows how they water them. The old president Henault is the pagod at madame du Deffand's, an old blind debauchée of wit, where I supped last night. The president is very near deaf, and much nearer superannuated. He sits by the table: the mistress of the house, who formerly was his, inquires after every dish on the table, is told who has eaten of which, and then bawls the bill of fare of every individual into the president's ears. In short, every mouthful is proclaimed, and so is every blunder I make against grammar. Some that

I make on purpose, succeed; and one of them is to be reported to the queen to-day by Henault, who is her great favourite. I had been at Versailles; and having been much taken notice of by her majesty, I said, alluding to madame de Sevigné, *La reine est le plus grand roi du monde.* You may judge if I am in possession by a scene that passed after supper. Sir James Macdonald had been mimicking Hume: I told the women, who, besides the mistress, were the duchesse de la Valiere, madame de Forcalquier, and a demoiselle, that to be sure they would be glad to have a specimen of Mr. Pitt's manner of speaking; and that nobody mimicked him so well as Elliot.[4] They firmly believed it, teased him for an hour, and at last said he was the rudest man in the world not to oblige them. It appeared the more strange, because here every body sings, reads their own works in public, or attempts any one thing without hesitation or capacity. Elliot speaks miserable French; which added to the diversion.

I had had my share of distress in the morning, by going through the operation of being presented to the whole royal family, down to the little Madame's pap-dinner, and had behaved as sillily as you will easily believe; hiding myself behind

[4] Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto.

every mortal. The queen called me up to her dressing-table, and seemed mightily disposed to gossip with me; but instead of enjoying my glory like madame de Sevigné, I slunk back into the crowd after a few questions. She told monsieur de Guerchy of it afterwards, and that I had run away from her, but said she would have her revenge at Fontainbleau — So I must go thither, which I did not intend. The king, dauphin, dauphiness, mesdames, and the wild beast, did not say a word to me. Yes, the wild beast, he of the Gevaudan. He is killed, and actually in the queen's anti-chamber, where he was exhibited to us with as much parade as if it was Mr. Pitt. It is an exceedingly large wolf, and, the connoisseurs say, has twelve teeth more than any wolf ever had since the days of Romulus's wet-nurse. The critics deny it to be the true beast; and I find most people think the beast's name is *legion, for there are many*. He was covered with a sheet, which two chasseurs lifted up for the foreign ministers and strangers. I dined at the duke of Praslin's with five-and-twenty tomes of the *corps diplomatique;* and after dinner was presented, by monsieur de Guerchy, to the duc de Choiseul. The duc de Praslin is as like his own letters in D'Eon's book as he can stare; that is, I believe, a very silly fellow. His wisdom is of the grave kind. His cousin, the first minister, is a little volatile being, whose countenance and manner

had nothing to frighten me for my country. I saw him but for three seconds, which is as much as he allows to any one body or thing. Monsieur de Guerchy,[5] whose goodness to me is inexpressible, took the trouble of walking every where with me, and carried me particularly to see the new office for state papers — I wish I could send it you. It is a large building, disposed like an hospital, with the most admirable order and method. Lodgings for every officer; his name and business written over his door. In the body is a perspective of seven or eight large chambers: each is painted with emblems, and wainscoted with presses with wired doors and crimson curtains. Over each press, in golden letters, the country to which the pieces relate, as Angleterre, Allemagne, &c. Each room has a large funnel of bronze with *or moulu*, like a column, to air the papers and preserve them. In short, it is as magnificent as useful.

From thence I went to see the reservoir of pictures at monsieur de Marigny's. They are what are not disposed of in the palaces, though sometimes changed with others. This *refuse*, which fills many rooms from top to bottom, is composed of the most glorious works of Raphael, L. da Vinci, Giorgione, Titian, Guido, Correggio,

[5] He had been ambassador in England.

&c. Many pictures, which I knew by their prints, without an idea where they existed, I found there.

The duc de Nivernois is extremely obliging to me. I have supped at madame de Bentheim's, who has a very fine house, and a woful husband. She is much livelier than any Frenchwoman. The liveliest man I have seen is the duc de Duras: he is shorter and plumper than lord Halifax, but very like him in the face. I am to sup with the Dussons on Sunday. In short, all that have been in England are exceedingly disposed to repay any civilities they received there. Monsieur de Caraman wrote from the country to excuse his not coming to see me, as his wife is on the point of being brought to bed, but begged I would come to them — So I would, if I was a man-midwife: but though they are easy on such heads, I am not used to it, and cannot make a party of pleasure of a labour.

Wilkes arrived here two days ago, and announced that he was going minister to Constantinople. To-day I hear he has lowered his credentials, and talks of going to England, if he can make his peace.[6] I thought, by the manner in which this was mentioned to me, that the person meant to sound me: but I made no answer; for,

---

[6] After his outlawry.

having given up politics in England, I certainly did not come to transact them here. He has not been to make me the first visit, which, as the last arrived, depends on him: so, never having spoken to him in my life, I have no call to seek him. I avoid all politics so much, that I had not heard one word here about Spain. I suppose my silence passes for very artful mystery, and puzzles the ministers, who keep spies on the most insignificant foreigner. It would have been lucky if I had been as watchful. At Chantilly I lost my portmanteau with half my linen; and the night before last I was robbed of a new frock, waistcoat, and breeches, laced with gold, a white and silver waistcoat, black velvet breeches, a knife, and a book. These are expenses I did not expect, and by no means entering into my system of extravagance.

I am very sorry for the death of lord Ophaly, and for his family. I knew the poor young man himself but little, but he seemed extremely good-natured. What the duke of Richmond will do for a hotel, I cannot conceive. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, October 13, 1765.

How are the mighty fallen! Yes, yes, madam, I am as like the duc de Richelieu as two peas; but then they are two old withered grey peas. Do you remember the fable of Cupid and Death, and what a piece of work they made with hustling their arrows together? This is just my case: love might shoot at me, but it was with a gouty arrow. I have had a relapse in both feet, and kept my bed six days: but the fit seems to be going off; my heart can already go alone, and my feet promise themselves the mighty luxury of a cloth shoe in two or three days. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay,[1] who are here, and are, alas! to carry this, have been of great comfort to me, and have brought their delightful little daughter, who is as quick as Ariel. Mr. Ramsay could want no assistance from me: what do we both exist upon here, madam, but your bounty and charity? When did you ever leave one of your friends in want of another? Madame Geoffrin came and sat two hours last night by my bed-side: I could have sworn it had been my lady Hervey, she was so good to me. It was with so much sense, infor-

[1] Allan Ramsay, the painter.

mation, instruction, and correction! The manner of the latter charms me. I never saw any body in my days that catches one's faults and vanities and impositions so quick, that explains them to one so clearly, and convinces one so easily. I never liked to be set right before! You cannot imagine how I taste it! I make her both my confessor and director, and begin to think I shall be a reasonable creature at last, which I had never intended to be. The next time I see her, I believe I shall say, "Oh! Common Sense, sit down: I have been thinking so and so; is not it absurd?" — for t'other sense and wisdom, I never liked them; I shall now hate them for her sake. If it was worth her while, I assure your ladyship she might govern me like a child.

The duc de Nivernois too is astonishingly good to me. In short, madam, I am going down hill, but the sun sets pleasingly. Your two other friends have been in Paris; but I was confined, and could not wait on them. I passed a whole evening with lady Mary Chabot most agreeably: she charged me over and over with a thousand compliments to your ladyship. For sights, alas! and pilgrimages, they have been cut short! I had destined the fine days of October to excursions; but you know, madam, what it is to reckon without one's host, the gout. It makes such a coward of me, that I shall be afraid almost of entering a church. I have lost too the Dumenil in

Phedre and Merope, two of her principal parts, but I hope not irrecoverably.

Thank you, madam, for the Taliacotian extract: it diverted me much. It is true, in general I neither see nor desire to see our wretched political trash: I am sick of it up to the fountain-head. It was my principal motive for coming hither; and had long been my determination, the first moment I should be at liberty, to abandon it all. I have acted from no views of interest; I have shown I did not; I have not disgraced myself—and I must be free. My comfort is, that, if I am blamed, it will be by *all* parties. A little peace of mind for the rest of my days is all I ask, to balance the gout.

I have writ to madame de Guerchy about your orange-flower water; and I sent your ladyship two little French pieces that I hope you received. The uncomfortable posture in which I write will excuse my saying any more; but it is no excuse against my trying to do any thing to please one, who always forgets pain when her friends are in question.

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Oct. 16, 1765.

I AM here, in this supposed metropolis of pleasure, triste enough; hearing from nobody in England, and again confined with the gout in both feet; yes, I caught cold, and it has returned; but as I begin to be a little acquainted with the nature of its caresses, I think the violence of its passion this time will be wasted within the fortnight. Indeed a stick and a great shoe do not commonly compose the dress which the English come hither to learn; but I shall content myself if I can limp about enough to amuse my eyes; my ears have already had their fill, and are not at all edified. My confinement preserves me from the journey to Fontainbleau, to which I had no great appetite; but then I lose the opportunity of seeing Versailles and St. Cloud at my leisure.

I wrote to you soon after my arrival; did you receive it? All the English books you named to me are to be had here at the following prices. Shakspeare in eight volumes unbound for twenty-one livres; in larger paper for twenty-seven. Congreve in three volumes for nine livres. Swift in twelve volumes for twenty-four livres, another edition for twenty-seven. So you see I do not forget your commissions: if you have farther orders let me know.

Wilkes is here, and has been twice to see me in my illness. He was very civil, but I cannot say entertained me much. I saw no wit; his conversation shews how little he has lived in good company, and the chief turn of it is the grossest bawdy. He has certainly one merit, notwithstanding the bitterness of his pen, that is, he has no rancour; not even against Sandwich, of whom he talked with the utmost temper. He shewed me some of his notes on Churchill's works, but they contain little more than one note on each poem to explain the subject of it.

The Dumenil is still the Dumenil, and nothing but curiosity could make me want the Clairon. Grandval is grown so fat and old, that I saw him through a whole play and did not guess him. Not one other, that you remember on the stage, remains there.

It is not a season for novelty in any way, as both the court and the world are out of town. The few that I know are almost all dispersed. The old president Henault made me a visit yesterday: he is extremely amiable, but has the appearance of a superannuated bacchanal; superannuated, poor soul! indeed he is! The duc de Richelieu is a lean old resemblance of old general Churchill, and like him affects still to have his Boothbies. Alas! poor Boothbies!

I hope, by the time I am convalescent, to have the Richmonds here. One of the miseries of

chronical illnesses is, that you are a prey to every fool, who, not knowing what to do with himself, brings his ennui to you, and calls it charity. Tell me a little the intended dates of your motions, that I may know where to write at you. Commend me kindly to Mr. John, and wish me a good night, of which I have had but one these ten days.

Yours ever.

To THOMAS BRAND, Esq.[1]

Paris, October 19, 1765.

Don't think I have forgot your commissions: I mentioned them to old Mariette this evening, who says he has got one of them, but never could meet with the other, and that it will be impossible for me to find either at Paris. You know, I suppose, that he would as soon part with an eye as with any thing in his own collection.

You may, if you please, suppose me extremely diverted here. Oh! exceedingly. In the first place, I have seen nothing; in the second, I have been confined this fortnight with a return of the gout in both feet; and in the third, I have not

---

[1] Of the Hoo in Herefordshire.

laughed since my lady Hertford went away. I assure you, you may come hither very safely, and be in no danger from mirth. Laughing is as much out of fashion as pantins or bilboquets. Good folks, they have not time to laugh. There is God and the king to be pulled down first; and men and women, one and all, are devoutly employed in the demolition. They think me quite profane, for having any belief left. But this is not my only crime: I have told them, and am undone by it, that they have taken from us to admire the two dullest things we had, whisk and Richardson — It is very true, and they want nothing but George Grenville to make their conversations, or rather dissertations, the most tiresome upon earth. For lord L****, if he would come hither, and turn free-thinker once more, he would be reckoned the most agreeable man in France— next to Mr. Hume, who is the only thing in the world that they believe implicitly; which they must do, for I defy them to understand any language that he speaks.

If I could divest myself of my wicked and *unphilosophic* bent to laughing, I should do very well. They are very civil and obliging to me, and several of the women are very agreeable, and some of the men. The duc de Nivernois has been beyond measure kind to me, and scarce missed a day without coming to see me during my confinement. The Guerchys are, as usual,

all friendship. I had given entirely into supping, as I do not love rising early, and still less meat breakfasts. The misfortune is, that in several houses they dine, and in others sup.

You will think it odd that I should want to laugh, when Wilkes, Sterne, and Foote are here; but the first does not make me laugh, the second never could, and for the third, I choose to pay five shillings when I have a mind he should divert me. Besides, I certainly did not come in search of English; and yet the man I have liked the best in Paris is an Englishman, lord Ossory, who is one of the most sensible amiable young men I ever saw, with a great deal of lord Tavistock in his manner.

The joys of Fontainbleau I miss by my illness — *Patienza!* If the gout deprived me of nothing better than a court.

The papers say the duke of Dorset is dead: what has he done for lord George? You cannot be so unconscionable as not to answer me. I don't ask who is to have his riband; nor how many bushels of fruit the duke of Newcastle's dessert for the hereditary prince contained, nor how often he kissed him for the sake of the *dear house of Brunswick* — No, keep your politics to yourselves; I want to know none of them:— when I do, and authentically, I will write to my lady * * * * or Charles Townshend.

Mrs. Pitt's friend, madame de Rochefort, is

one of my principal attachments, and very agreeable indeed. Madame de Mirepoix another. For my admiration, madame de Monaco — but I believe you don't doubt my lord ****'s taste in sensualities. March's passion, the marechalle d'Estrées, is affected, cross, and not at all handsome. The princes of the blood are pretty much retired, do not go to Portsmouth and Salisbury once a week, nor furnish every other paragraph to the newspapers. Their campaigns are confined to killing boars and stags, two or three hundred in a year.

Adieu! Mr. Foley is my banker; or it is still more sure if you send your letter to Mr. Conway's office.

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, Oct. 28, 1765.

MR. Hume[1] sends me word from Fontainbleau, that your brother, some time in the spring of 1764, transmitted to the English ministry *a pretty exact and very authentic account of the French*

---

[1] David Hume was secretary of embassy to the earl of Hertford during his residence at Paris.

finances; these are his words: *and that it will be easily found among his lordship's dispatches of that period.* To the other question I have received no answer; I suppose he has not yet been able to inform himself.

This goes by an English coachman of count Lauragais, sent over to buy more horses: therefore I shall write a little ministerially, and, perhaps, surprise you, if you are not already apprised of things in the light I see them.

The dauphin will probably hold out very few days. His death, that is, the near prospect of it, fills *the philosophers* with the greatest joy, as it was feared he would endeavour the restoration of the Jesuits. You will think the sentiments of *the philosophers* very odd *state news*—but do you know who *the philosophers* are, or what the term means here? In the first place, it comprehends almost every body; and in the next, means men, who avowing war against popery, aim, many of them, at a subversion of all religion, and still many more, at the destruction of regal power. How do you know this? you will say; you, who have been but six weeks in France, three of which you have been confined to your chamber. True: but in the first period I went every where, and heard nothing else; in the latter, I have been extremely visited, and have had long and explicit conversations with many, who think as I tell you, and with a few of the other side, who are no less

persuaded that there are such intentions. In particular, I had two officers here t'other night, neither of them young, whom I had difficulty to keep from a serious quarrel, and who, in the heat of the dispute, informed me of much more than I could have learnt with great pains.

As a proof that my ideas are not quite visions, I send you a most curious paper;[2] such as I believe no *magistrate* would have pronounced in the time of Charles I. I should not like to have it known to come from me, nor any part of the intelligence I send you; with regard to which, if you think it necessary to communicate it to particular persons, I desire my name may be suppressed. I tell it you for *your* satisfaction and information, but would not have any body else think that I do any thing here but amuse myself: my amusements indeed are triste enough, and consist wholly in trying to get well; but my recovery moves very slowly. I have not yet had any thing but cloth shoes on, live sometimes a whole day on warm water, and am never tolerably well till twelve or one o'clock.

I have had another letter from sir Horace Mann, who has much at heart his riband and increase of character. Consequently you know, as I love him so much, I must have them at heart

[2] This paper does not appear.

too. Count Lorenzi is recalled, because here they think it necessary to send a Frenchman of higher rank to the new Grand Ducal court. I wish sir Horace could be raised on this occasion. For his riband, his promise is so old and so positive, that it is quite a hardship.

Pray put the colonies in good humour; I see they are violently disposed to the new administration.

I have not time to say more, nor more to say if I had time; so good night. Let me know if you receive this, and how soon: it goes the day after to-morrow. Various reports say the duke of Richmond comes this week. I sent you a letter by monsieur de Guerchy.

Dusson, I hear, goes ambassador to Poland. Tell lady Ailesbury that I have five or six little parcels, though not above one for her, of laces and ribands, which lady C * * * * left with me; but how to convey them the lord knows.

Yours ever.

To Mr. GRAY.

Paris, Nov. 19, 1765.

You are very kind to inquire so particularly after my gout. I wish I may not be too circumstantial in my answer: but you have tapped a dangerous

topic; I can talk gout by the hour. It is my great mortification, and has disappointed all the hopes that I had built on temperance and hardiness. I have resisted like a hermit, and exposed myself to all weathers and seasons like a smuggler; and in vain. I have however still so much of the obstinacy of both professions left, that I think I shall continue, and cannot obey you in keeping myself warm. I have gone through my second fit under one blanket, and already go about in a silk waistcoat with my bosom unbuttoned. In short, I am as prejudiced to my regimen, though so ineffectual, as I could have been to all I expected from it. The truth is, I am almost as willing to have the gout as to be liable to catch cold; and must run up stairs and down, in and out of doors, when I will, or I cannot have the least satisfaction. This will convince you how readily I comply with another of your precepts, walking as soon as I am able.—For receipts, you may trust me for making use of none: I would not see a physician at the worst, but have quacked myself as boldly as quacks treat others. I laughed at your idea of quality receipts, it came so *à-propos*. There is not a man or woman here that is not a perfect old nurse, and who does not talk gruel and anatomy with equal fluency and ignorance. One instance shall serve: madame de Bouzols, marshal Berwick's daughter, assured me there was nothing so good for the gout, as to pre-

serve the parings of my nails in a bottle close stopped. When I try any illustrious nostrum, I shall give the preference to this.

So much for the gout! I told you what was coming. As to the ministry, I know and care very little about them. I told you and told them long ago, that if ever a change happened I would bid adieu to politics for ever. Do me the justice to allow that I have not altered with the times. I was so impatient to put this resolution in execution, that I hurried out of England before I was sufficiently recovered. I shall not run the same hazard again in haste; but will stay here till I am perfectly well, and the season of warm weather coming on or arrived; though the charms of Paris have not the least attraction for me, nor would keep me here an hour on their own account. For the city itself, I cannot conceive where my eyes were: it is the ugliest, beastly town in the universe. I have not seen a mouthful of verdure out of it, nor have they any thing green but their treillage and window-shutters. Trees cut into fire-shovels, and stuck into pedestals of chalk, compose their country. Their boasted knowledge of society is reduced to talking of their suppers, and every malady they have about them, or know of. The dauphin is at the point of death: every morning the physicians frame an account of him; and happy is he or she who can produce a copy of this lie, called a *bulletin*. The night before last,

one of these was produced at supper where I was: it was read, and said he had had *une evacuation fœtide*. I beg your pardon, though you are not at supper. The old lady of the house (who by the way is quite blind, was the regent's mistress for a fortnight, and is very agreeable) called out, 'Oh! they have forgot to mention that he threw down his chamber-pot, and was forced to change his bed.' There were present several women of the first rank; as madame de la Valiere, whom you remember duchesse de Vaujour, and who is still miraculously pretty though fifty-three; a very handsome madame de Forcalquier, and others—nor was this conversation at all particular to that evening.

Their gaiety is not greater than their delicacy—but I will not expatiate. In short, they are another people from what they were. They may be growing wise, but the intermediate passage is dulness. Several of the women are agreeable, and some of the men; but the latter are in general vain and ignorant. The *sçavants*—I beg their pardons, the *philosophes*—are insupportable, superficial, overbearing and fanatic: they preach incessantly, and their avowed doctrine is atheism; you would not believe how openly—Don't wonder therefore if I should return a Jesuit. Voltaire himself does not satisfy them. One of their lady devotees said of him, *Il est bigot, c'est un deiste.*'

I am as little pleased with their taste in trifles.

63780

Crebillon is entirely out of fashion, and Marivaux a proverb: *marivauder* and *marivaudage* are established terms for being prolix and tiresome.—I thought that we were fallen, but they are ten times lower.

Notwithstanding all I have said, I have found two or three societies that please me; am amused with the novelty of the whole, and should be sorry not to have come. The Dumenil is, if possible, superior to what you remember. I am sorry not to see the Clairon; but several persons whose judgments seem the soundest prefer the former. Preville is admirable in low comedy. The mixture of Italian comedy and comic operas, prettily written, and set to Italian music, at the same theatre, is charming, and gets the better both of their operas and French comedy; the latter of which is seldom full, with all its merit. *Petit-maîtres* are obsolete, like our lords Foppington—*Tout le monde est philosophe*—When I grow very sick of this last nonsense, I go and compose myself at the Chartreuse, where I am almost tempted to prefer Le Sœur to every painter I know—— Yet what new old treasures are come to light, routed out of the Louvre, and thrown into new lumber-rooms at Versailles!—— But I have not room to tell you what I have seen! I will keep this and other chapters for Strawberry. Adieu! and thank you.

Yours ever.

Old Mariette has shown me a print by Diepenbecke of the duke and duchess of Newcastle at dinner with their family. You would oblige me, if you would look into all their graces' folios, and see if it is not a frontispiece to some one of them. Then he has such a Petitot of madame d'Olonne! The Pompadour offered him fifty louis for it—Alack, so would I!

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, Nov. 21, 1765.

MADAME Geoffrin has given me a parcel for your ladyship with two knotting-bags, which I will send by the first opportunity that seems safe: but I hear of nothing but difficulties; and shall, I believe, be saved from ruin myself, from not being able to convey any purchases into England. Thus I shall have made an almost fruitless journey to France, if I can neither fling away my money, nor preserve my health. At present, indeed, the gout is gone. I have had my house swept, and made as clean as I could—no very easy matter in this country; but I live in dread of seven worse spirits entering in. The terror I am under of a new fit has kept me from almost seeing any thing. The damps and fogs are full as great and frequent here as in London; but there is a little frost to-

day, and I shall begin my devotions to-morrow. It is not being fashionable to visit churches; but I am *de la vieille cour;* and I beg your ladyship to believe that I have no youthful pretensions. The duchess of Richmond tells me that they have made twenty foolish stories about me in England; and say, that my person is admired here. I cannot help what is said without foundation; but the French have neither lost their eyes, nor I my senses. A skeleton I was born—skeleton I am—and death will have no trouble in making me one. I have not made any alteration in my dress, and certainly did not study it in England. Had I had any such ridiculous thoughts, the gout is too sincere a monitor to leave one under any such error. Pray, madam, tell lord and lady Holland what I say: they have heard these idle tales; and they know so many of my follies, that I should be sorry they believed more of me than are true. If all arose from madame Geoffrin calling me in joke *le nouveau Richelieu,* I give it under my hand that I resemble him in nothing but wrinkles.

Your ladyship is much in the right to forbear reading politics. I never look at the political letters that come hither in the Chronicles. I was sick to death of them before I set out; and perhaps should not have stirred from home, if I had not been sick of them and all they relate to. If any body could write ballads and epigrams *à la bonne heure!* But dull personal abuse in prose is

tiresome indeed — A serious invective against a pickpocket, or written by a pickpocket, who has so little to do as to read?

The dauphin continues languishing to his exit, and keeps every body at Fontainbleau. There is a little bustle now about the parliament of Bretagne; but you may believe, madam, that when I was tired of the squabbles at London, I did not propose to interest myself in quarrels at Hull or Liverpool. Indeed if the duc de Chaulnes[1] commanded at Rennes, or Pomenars[2] was sent to prison, I might have a little curiosity. You wrong me in thinking I quoted a text from my Saint[3] ludicrously. On the contrary, I am so true a bigot, that, if she could have talked nonsense, I should, like any other bigot, believe she was inspired.

The season, and the emptiness of Paris, prevent any thing new from appearing. All I can send your ladyship is a very pretty logogriphe, made by the old blind madame du Deffand, whom perhaps you know—certainly must have heard of. I sup there very often; and she gave me this last night — you must guess it.

---

[1] Governor of Brittany in the time of madame de Sevigné.

[2] See madame de Sevigné's Letters.

[3] Madame de Sevigné.

Quoique je forme un corps, je ne suis qu'une idée;
Plus ma beauté vieillit, plus elle est decidée:
Il faut, pour me trouver, ignorer d'où je viens:
Je tiens tout de lui, qui reduit tout à rien. [4]

Lady Mary Chabot inquires often after your ladyship. Your other two friends are not yet returned to Paris; but I have had several obliging messages from the duchesse d'Aiguillon.

It pleased me extremely, madam, to find no mention of your own gout in your letter. I always apprehend it for you, as you try its temper to the utmost, especially by staying late in the country, which you know it hates. Lord! it has broken my spirit so, that I believe it might make me leave Strawberry at a minute's warning. It has forbid me tea, and been obeyed; and I thought that one of the most difficult points to carry with me. Do, let us be well, madam, and have no gouty notes to compare!

I am your ladyship's most faithful humble servant.

---

[4] The word is *noblesse*.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Nov. 21, 1765.

You must not be surprised when my letters arrive long after their date. I write them at my leisure, and send them when I find any Englishmen going to London, that I may not be kept in check, if they were to pass through both French and English posts.

Your letter to madame Roland, and the books for her, will set out very securely in a day or two. My bookseller here happens to be of Rheims; and knows madame Roland, *comme deux gouttes d'eau.* This perhaps is not a well-placed simile, but the French always use one, and when they are once established, and one knows the tune, it does not signify sixpence for the sense.

My gout and my stick have entirely left me. I totter still, it is true, but I trust shall be able to whisk about at Strawberry as well almost as ever. When that hour strikes, to be sure I shall not be very sorry. The sameness of the life here is worse than any thing but English politics and the House of Commons. Indeed I have a mind still to see more people here, more sights, and more of the Dumenil. The dauphin, who is not dead yet, detains the whole court at Fontainbleau, whither I dare not venture, as the situation is very damp, and the lodgings abominable. Sights too,

I have scarce seen any yet; and I must satisfy my curiosity; for hither, I think, I shall never come again. No, let us sit down quietly and comfortably, and enjoy our coming old age. Oh! if you are in earnest, and will transplant yourself to Roehampton, how happy I shall be! You know, if you believe an experience of above thirty years, that you are one of the very, very few, for whom I really care a straw. You know how long I have been vexed at seeing so little of you. What has one to do, when one grows tired of the world, as we both do, but to draw nearer and nearer, and gently waste the remains of life with the friends with whom one began it! Young and happy people will have no regard for us and our old stories; and they are in the right: but we shall not tire one another; we shall laugh together, when nobody is by to laugh at us, and we may think ourselves young enough, when we see nobody younger. Roehampton is a delightful spot, at once cheerful and retired. You will amble in your chaise about Richmond-park: we shall see one another as often as we like; I shall frequently peep at London, and bring you tales of it, and we shall sometimes touch a card with the Clive, and laugh our fill; for I must tell you, I desire to die, when I have nobody left to laugh with me. I have never yet seen or heard any thing serious, that was not ridiculous. Jesuits, methodists, philosophers, politicians, the hypocrite Rousseau, the

scoffer Voltaire, the encyclopedists, the Humes, the Lyttletons, the Grenvilles, the atheist tyrant of Prussia, and the mountebank of history, Mr. Pitt, all are to me but impostors in their various ways. Fame or interest are their objects; and after all their parade, I think a ploughman who sows, reads his almanack, and believes the stars but so many farthing candles, created to prevent his falling into a ditch as he goes home at night, a wiser and more rational being, and I am sure an honester than any of them. Oh! I am sick of visions and systems, that shove one another aside, and come over again, like the figures in a moving picture. Rabelais brightens up to me as I see more of the world; he treated it as it deserved, laughed at it all, and as I judge from myself, ceased to hate it; for I find hatred an unjust preference. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To the Right Hon. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, Nov. 28, 1765.

What, another letter! Yes, yes, madam; though I must whip and spur, I must try to make my thanks keep up with your favours: for any other return, you have quite distanced me. This is to

acknowledge the receipt of the duchess d'Aiguillon — you may set what sum you please against the debt. She is delightful, and has much the most of a woman of quality of any I have seen, and more cheerfulness too; for, to show your ladyship that I am sincere, that my head is not turned, and that I retain some of my prejudices still, I avow that gaiety, whatever it was formerly, is no longer the growth of this country; and I will own too that Paris can produce women of quality that I should not call women of fashion: I will not use so ungentle a term as vulgar; but for their indelicacy, I could call it still worse. Yet with these faults, and the latter is an enormous one in my English eyes, many of the women are exceedingly agreeable — I cannot say so much for the men — always excepting the duc de Nivernois. You would be entertained, for a quarter of an hour, with his duchess — she is the duke of Newcastle properly placed, that is, chattering incessantly out of devotion, and making interest against the devil that she may dispose of bishoprics in the next world.

Madame d'Egmont is expected to-day, which will run me again into arrears. I don't know how it is — Yes, I do: it is natural to impose on bounty, and I am like the rest of the world: I am going to abuse your goodness, *because* I know nobody's so great. Besides being the best friend in the

world, you are the best *commissionnaire* in the world, madam: you understand from friendship to scissors. The enclosed model was trusted to me, to have two pair made as well as possible—but I really blush at my impertinence. However, all the trouble I mean to give your ladyship is, to send your groom of the chambers to bespeak them; and a pair besides of the common size for a lady, as well made as possible, for the honour of England's steel.

The two knotting-bags from madame Geoffrin went away by a clergyman two days ago; and I concerted all the tricks the doctor and I could think of, to elude the vigilance of the custom-house officers.

With this, I send your ladyship the *Orpheline leguée:* its intended name was the *Anglomanie;* my only reason for sending it; for it has little merit, and had as slender success, being acted but five times. However, there is nothing else new.

The dauphin continues in the same languishing and hopeless state, but with great coolness and firmness. Somebody gave him t'other day *The preparation for death:*[1] he said, "*C'est la nouvelle du jour.*"

I have nothing more to say, but what I have

[1] The title of a French book of devotion.

always to say, madam, from the beginning of my letters to the end, that I am

Your ladyship's most obliged
and most devoted humble servant.

Nov. 28, three o'clock.

Oh, madam, madam, madam, what do you think I have found since I wrote my letter this morning? I am out of my wits! Never was any thing like my luck; it never forsakes me! I have found count Grammont's picture! I believe I shall see company upon it, certainly keep the day holy. I went to the Grand Augustins to see the pictures of the reception of the knights of the Holy Ghost: they carried me into a chamber full of their portraits; I was looking for Bassompierre; my *laquais de louage* opened a door, and said, "Here are more. One of the first that struck me was *Philibert comte de Grammont!* It is old, not at all handsome, but has a great deal of finesse in the countenance. I shall think of nothing now but having it copied.—If I had seen or done nothing else, I should be content with my journey hither.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, Nov. 29, 1765.

As I answered your short letter with a very long one, I shall be shorter in answer to your long, which I received late last night from Fontainbleau: it is not very necessary; but as lord William Gordon sets out for England on Monday, I take that opportunity.

The duke of Richmond tells me that Choiseul has promised every thing. I wish it may be performed, and *speedily*, as it will give you an opportunity of opening the parliament with great eclat. My opinion you know is, that this is the moment for pushing them and obtaining.

Thank you for all you say about my gout. We have had a week of very hard frost, that has done me great good, and rebraced me. The swelling of my legs is quite gone. What has done me more good, is having entirely left off tea, to which I believe the weakness of my stomach was owing, having had no sickness since. In short, I think I am cured of every thing but my fears. You talk coolly of going as far as Naples, and propose my going with you. I would not go so far, if Naples was the direct road to the new Jerusalem. I have no thought or wish, but to get home, and be quiet for the rest of my days, which I shall most certainly do the first moment the season will let me;

and if I once get to London again, shall be scarce tempted ever to lie in an inn more. I have refused to go to Aubigné, though I should lie but one night on the road. You may guess what I have suffered, when I am grown so timorous about my health. — However, I am again reverted to my system of water, and trying to recover my hardiness — but nothing has at all softened me towards physicians.

You see I have given you a serious answer, though I am rather disposed to smile at your proposal. Go to Italy! for what? — Oh! to quit — do you know, I think that as idle a thought as the other. Pray stay where you are, and do some good to your country, or retire when you cannot — but don't put your finger in your eye and cry after the holidays and sugar-plums of Park-place. You have engaged and must go through, or be hindered. Could you tell the world the reason? Would not all men say you had found yourself incapable of what you had undertaken? I have no patience with your thinking so idly. It would be a reflection on your understanding and character, and a want of resolution unworthy of you.

My advice is, to ask for the first great government that falls, if you will not take your regiment again; to continue acting vigorously and honestly where you are. Things are never stable enough in our country to give you a prospect of a long slavery. Your defect is irresolution. When you have taken

your post, act up to it; and if you are driven from it, your retirement will then be as honourable (and more satisfactory) than your administration. I speak frankly, as my friendship for you directs. My way of acting (though a private instance) is agreeable to my doctrine. I determined, whenever our opposition should be over, to have done with politics; and you see I have adhered to my resolution by coming hither; and therefore you may be convinced that I speak my thoughts. I don't ask your pardon, because I should be forced to ask my own if I did not tell you what I think the best for you. You have life and Park-place enough to come, and *you* have not had five months of gout. Make yourself independent honourably, which you may do by a government; but if you will take my advice, don't accept a ministerial place when you cease to be a minister. The former is a reward due to your profession and services, the latter is a degradation. You know the haughtiness of my spirit; I give you no advice but what I would follow.

I sent lady Ailesbury *The Orpheline leguée:* a poor performance; but the subject made me think she would like to see it. I am over head and ears at count Caylus's auction, and have bought half of it for a song — but I am still in greater felicity and luck, having discovered, by mère accident, a portrait of count Grammont, after having been in search of one these fifteen years, and assured there

was no such thing. *A-propos*, I promised you my own: but besides that there is nobody here that excels in painting skeletons, seriously, their painters are bitter bad, and as much inferior to Reynolds and Ramsay, as Hudson to Vandyck. I had rather stay till my return. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, December 5, 1765.

I HAVE not above a note's worth to say; but as lord Ossory sets out to-morrow, I just send you a line.

The dauphin, if he is still alive, which some folks doubt, is kept so only by cordials; though the bishop of Glandeve has assured the queen that he had God's own word for his recovery, which she still believes, whether her son is dead or not.

The remonstrance of the parliament of Paris, on the dissolution of that of Bretagne, is very decent; they are to have an audience next week. They do no touch on Chalotais, because the accusation against him is for treason. What do you think that treason is? A correspondence with Mr. Pitt, to whom he is made to say, *that Rennes is nearer to London than Paris.* It is now believed that the anonymous letters, supposed to be written by Cha-

lotais, were forged by a jesuit — those to Mr. Pitt could not have even so good an author.

The duke of Richmond is still at Aubigné: I wonder he stays, for it is the hardest frost alive. Mr. Hume does not go to Ireland, where your brother finds he would by no means be welcome.— I have a notion he will stay here till your brother's return.

The duc de Praslin, it is said, will retire at Christmas. As La Borde, the great banker of the court, is trying to retire too, my cousin, who is much connected with La Borde, suspects that Choiseul is not very firm himself.

I have supped with monsieur de Maurepas, and another night with marshal Richelieu: the first is extremely agreeable and *sensible;* and, I am glad, not *Minister*. The other is an old piece of tawdry, worn out, but endeavouring to brush itself up; and put me in mind of lord Chesterfield, for they laugh before they know what he has said — and are in the right, for I think they would not laugh afterwards.

I send lady Ailesbury the words and music of the prettiest opera comique in the world — I wish I could send her the actors too. Adieu!

Yours ever.

December 9th.

Lord Ossory put off his journey; which stopped this letter, and it will now go by Mr. Andr. Stuart.

The face of things is changed here, which I am impatient to tell you, that you may see it is truth, not system, which I pique myself on sending you. The vigour of the court has frightened the parliaments. That of Pau has submitted. The procureurs, &c. of Rennes, who, it was said, would not plead before the new commission, were told, that if they did not plead the next day they should be hanged without a trial. No bribe ever operated faster!

I heard t'other day, that some Spanish minister, I forget his name, being dead, Squillace would take his department, and Grimaldi have that of the West Indies.—He is the worst that could have it, as we have no greater enemy.

The dauphin is certainly alive, but in the most shocking way possible; his bones worn through his skin, a great swelling behind, and so relaxed, that his intestines appear from that part; and yesterday the mortification was suspected.

I have received a long letter from lady Ailesbury, for which I give her a thousand thanks; and would answer it directly, if I had not told you every earthly thing I know.

The duke and duchess[1] are, I hear, at Fontainbleau: the moment they return, I will give the duchess lady Ailesbury's commission.

---

[1] Of Richmond.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, January 2, 1766.

WHEN I came to Paris, madam, I did not know that by New-Year's Day I should find myself in Siberia; at least as cold. There have not been two good days together since the middle of October. — However, I do not complain, as I am both well and well pleased, though I wish for a little of your sultry English weather, all French as I am. I have entirely left off dinners, and lead the life I always liked, of lying late in bed, and sitting up late. I am told of nothing but how contradictory this is to your ladyship's orders; but as I shall have dull dinners and triste evenings enough when I return to England, all your kindness cannot persuade me to sacrifice my pleasures here too. Many of my opinions are fantastic; perhaps this is one, that nothing produces gout like doing any thing one dislikes. I believe the gout, like a near relation, always visits one when one has some other plague. Your ladyship's dependence on the waters of Sunning-hill is, I hope, better founded; but in the mean time my system is full as pleasant.

Madame d'Aiguillon's goodness to me does not abate, nor madame Geoffrin's. I have seen but little of madame d'Egmont, who seems very good,

and is universally in esteem. She is now in great affliction, having lost suddenly monsieur Pignatelli, the minister at Parma, whom she bred up, and whom she and her family had generously destined for her grand-daughter, an immense heiress. It was very delicate and touching what madame d'Egmont said to her daughter-in-law on this occasion: — "*Vous voyez, ma chere, combien j'aime mes enfans d'adoption!*" This daughter-in-law is delightfully pretty, and civil, and gay, and conversible, though not a regular beauty like madame de Monaco.

The bitterness of the frost deters me, madam, from all sights: I console myself with good company, and still more, with being absent from bad. Negative as this satisfaction is, it is incredibly great, to live in a town like this, and to be sure every day of not meeting one face one hates! I scarce know a positive pleasure equal to it.

Your ladyship and lord Holland shall laugh at me as much as you please for my dread of being thought *charming;* yet I shall not deny my panic, as surely nothing is so formidable as to have one's limbs on crutches and one's understanding in leading-strings. The prince of Conti laughed at me t'other day on the same account. I was complaining to the old blind charming madame du Deffand, that she preferred Mr. Crawford to me: "What," said the prince, "does not she love

you?" "No, sir," I replied, "she likes me no better than if she had seen me."

Mr. Hume carries this letter and Rousseau to England. I wish the former may not repent having engaged with the latter, who contradicts and quarrels with all mankind, in order to obtain their admiration. I think both his means and his end below such a genius. If I had talents like his, I should despise any suffrage below my own standard, and should blush to owe any part of my fame to singularities and affectations. But great parts seem like high towers erected on high mountains, the more exposed to every wind, and readier to tumble. Charles Townshend is blown round the compass; Rousseau insists that the north and south blow at the same time; and Voltaire demolishes the Bible to erect fatalism in its stead:—So compatible are the greatest abilities and greatest absurdities!

Madame d'Aiguillon gave me the enclosed letter for your ladyship. I wish I had any thing else to send you; but there are no new books, and the theatres are shut up for the dauphin's death, who, I believe, is the greatest loss they have had since Harry IV.

I am your ladyship's
most faithful and obedient humble servant.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Paris, Jan. 1766.

It is in vain, I know, my dear sir, to scold you, though I have such a mind to it — nay, I must. Yes, you that will not lie a night at Strawberry in autumn for fear of the gout, to stay in the country till this time, and till you caught it! I know you will tell me, it did not come till you had been two days in town. Do, and I shall have no more pity for you, than if I was your wife, and had wanted to come to town two months ago.

I am perfectly well, though to be sure Lapland is the torrid zone in comparison of Paris. We have had such a frost for this fortnight, that I went nine miles to dine in the country to-day, in a villa exactly like a green-house, except that there was no fire but in one room. We were four in a coach, and all our chinks stopped with furs, and yet all the glasses were frozen. We dined in a paved hall painted in fresco, with a fountain at one end; for in this country they live in a perpetual opera, and persist in being young when they are old, and hot when they are frozen. At the end of the hall sat shivering three glorious maccaws, a vast cockatoo, and two poor parroquets, who squalled like the children in the wood after their nursery-fire! I am come home, and blowing my billets between every paragraph, yet can scarce

move my fingers. However, I must be dressed presently, and go the comtesse de la Marche, who has appointed nine at night for my audience. It seems a little odd to us to be presented to a princess of the blood at that hour—but I told you, there is not a tittle in which our manners resemble one another. I was presented to her father-in-law the prince of Conti last Friday. In the middle of the *levée* entered a young woman, too plain I thought to be any thing but his near relation. I was confirmed in my opinion, by seeing her, after he had talked to her, go round the circle and do the honours of it. I asked a gentleman near me if that was the comtesse de la Marche? He burst into a violent laughter, and then told me, it was mademoiselle Auguste, a dancer!—Now, who was in the wrong?

I give you these as samples of many scenes that have amused me, and which will be charming food at Strawberry. At the same time that I see all their ridicules, there is a *douceur* in the society of the women of fashion that captivates me. I like the way of life, though not lively; though the men are posts and apt to be arrogant, and though there are twenty ingredients wanting to make the style perfect. I have totally washed my hands of their *savants* and philosophers, and do not even envy you Rousseau, who has all the *charlatanerie* of count St. Germain to make himself singular and talked of. I suppose Mrs. * * * *, my lord * * * *, and a certain lady friend of mine will be in raptures with him,

especially as conducted by Mr. Hume. But, however I admire his parts, neither he nor any *Genius* I have known has had common sense enough to balance the impertinence of their pretensions. They hate priests, but love dearly to have an altar at their feet; for which reason it is much pleasanter to read them than to know them. Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever.

January 16.

This has been writ this week, and waiting for a conveyance, and as yet has got none. Favre tells me you are recovered, but you don't tell me so yourself. I enclose a trifle that I wrote lately,[1] which got about and has made enormous noise in a city where they run and cackle after an event, like a parcel of hens after an accidental husk of a grape. It has made me the fashion, and made madame de Boufflers and the prince of Conti very angry with me; the former intending to be rapt to the temple of Fame by clinging to Rousseau's Armenian robe. I am peevish that with his parts he should be such a mountebank: but what made me more peevish was, that after receiving Wilkes with the greatest civilities, he paid court to Mr. Hume by complaining of Wilkes's visit and intrusion.

---

1 The letter from the king of Prussia to Rousseau.

Upon the whole, I would not but have come hither; for, since I am doomed to live in England, it is some comfort to have seen that the French are ten times more contemptible than we are. I am a little ungrateful; but I cannot help seeing with my eyes, though I find other people make nothing of seeing without theirs. I have endless histories to amuse you with when we meet, which shall be at the end of March. It is much more tiresome to be fashionable than unpopular; I am used to the latter, and know how to behave under it: but I cannot stand for member of parliament of Paris. Adieu!

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, January 5, 1766.

Lady Beaulieu acts like herself, and so do you in being persuaded that nobody will feel any satisfaction that comes to you with more transport than I do; you deserve her friendship, because you are more sensible to the grace of the action, than to the thing itself; of which, besides approving the sentiment, I am glad, for if my lady Cardigan is as happy in drawing a straw, as in *picking straws*, you will certainly miss your green coat. Yet methinks you would make an excellent Robin Hood *reformé*, with *little John* your brother.

How you would carol Mr. Percy's old ballads under the green-wood tree! I had rather have you in my *merry Sherwood* than at Greatworth, and should delight in your picture drawn as a bold forester, in a green frock, with your rosy hue, grey locks, and comely belly. In short, the favour itself, and the manner are so agreeable, that I shall be at least as much disappointed as you can be, if it fails. One is not ashamed to wear a feather from the hand of a friend. We both scorn to ask or accept boons; but it is pleasing to have life painted with images by the pencil of friendship. Visions you know have always been my pasture; and so far from growing old enough to quarrel with their emptiness, I almost think there is no wisdom comparable to that of exchanging what is called the realities of life for dreams. Old castles, old pictures, old histories, and the babble of old people, make one live back into centuries, that cannot disappoint one. One holds fast and surely what is past. The dead have exhausted their power of deceiving; one can trust Catherine of Medicis now. In short, you have opened a new landscape to my fancy; and my lady Beaulieu will oblige me as much as you, if she puts the long bow into your hands. I don't know but the idea may produce some other Castle of Otranto.

The victorious arms of the present ministry in parliament will make me protract my stay here,

lest it should be thought I awaited the decision of the event; next to successful enemies I dread triumphant friends. To be sure, lord Temple and George Grenville are very proper to be tied to a conqueror's car, and to *drag their slow lengths along*; but it is too ridiculous to see goody Newcastle exulting like old Marius in a seventh consulship. Don't tell it, but as far as I can calculate my own intention, I shall not set out before the twenty-fifth of March. That will meet your abode in London; and I shall get a day or two out of you for some chat at Strawberry on all I have seen and done here. For this reason I will anticipate nothing now, but bid you good morrow, after telling you a little story. The canton of Berne ordered all the impressions of Helvetius's Esprit, and Voltaire's Pucelle to be seized. The officer of justice employed by them came into the council and said, "*Magnifiques seigneurs, après toutes les recherches possibles, on n'a pû trouver dans toute la ville que très peu de l'Esprit, et pas une Pucelle.*" Adieu, Robin and John.

Yours ever.

January 9th.

I HAD not sent away my letter, being disappointed of a messenger, and now receive yours of December the thirtieth. My house is most heartily at your service, and I shall write to Favre to have it ready for you. You will see by the former part

of this letter, that I do not think of being in England before the end of March. All I dislike in this contract is the fear, that if I drive you out of my house, I shall drive you out of town; and as you will find, I have not a bed to offer you, but my own, and Favre's, in which your servant will lie, for I have stripped Arlington-street to furnish Strawberry. In the mean time you will be comfortable in my bed, and need have no trouble about Favre, as he lodges at his wife's while I am absent. Let them know in time to have the beds aired.

I don't understand one syllable of your paragraph about miss Talbot, admiral Cornish, and Mr. Hampden's son. I thought she was married, and I forget to whom.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, Saturday night, Jan. 11, 1766.

I HAVE just now, madam, received the scissors, by general Vernon, from Mr. Conway's office. Unluckily I had not received your ladyship's notification of them sooner, for want of a conveyance, and wrote to my servant to inquire of yours how they had been sent; which I fear may have added a little trouble to all you had been so good as to take, and for which I give you ten thousand

thanks: but your ladyship is so exact and so friendly, that it almost discourages rather than encourages me. I cannot bring myself to think that ten thousand obligations are new letters of credit.

I have seen Mrs. F * * * *, and her husband may be as happy as he will: I cannot help pitying him. She told me it is *coulder* here than in England; and in truth I believe so: I blow the fire between every paragraph, and am quite cut off from all sights. The agreeableness of the evenings makes me some amends. I am just going to sup at madame d'Aiguillon's with madame d'Egmont, and I hope madame de Brionne, whom I have not yet seen; but she is not very well, and it is doubtful. My last new passion, and I think the strongest, is the duchess de Choiseul. Her face is pretty, not very pretty; her person a little model. Cheerful, modest, full of attentions, with the happiest propriety of expression, and greatest quickness of reason and judgment, you would take her for the queen of an allegory: one dreads its finishing, as much as a lover, if she would admit one, would wish it should finish. — In short, madam, though *you* are the last person that will believe it, France is so agreeable, and England so much the reverse, that I don't know when I shall return. The civilities, the kindnesses, the honours I receive, are so many and so great, that I am continually forced to put myself in mind how little

I am entitled to them, and how many of them I owe to your ladyship. I shall talk you to death at my return — Shall you bear to hear me tell you a thousand times over, that madame Geoffrin is the most rational woman in the world, and madame d'Aiguillon the most animated and most obliging? — I think you will — Your ladyship *can* endure the panegyric of your friends. If you should grow impatient to hear them commended, you have nothing to do but to come over. The best air in the world is that where one is pleased: Sunning waters are nothing to it. The frost is so hard, it is impossible to have the gout; and though the fountain of youth is not here, the fountain of age is, which comes to just the same thing. One is never old here, or never thought so. One makes verses as if one was but seventeen — for example: —

ON MADAME DE FORCALQUIER SPEAKING ENGLISH.

Soft sounds that steal from fair Forcalquier's lips,
Like bee that murmuring the jasmin sips!
Are these my native accents? None so sweet,
So gracious, yet my ravish'd ears did meet.
O pow'r of beauty! thy enchanting look
Can melodize each note in nature's book.
The roughest wrath of Russians, when they swear,
Pronounc'd by thee, flows soft as Indian air;
And dulcet breath, attemper'd by thine eyes,
Gives British prose o'er Tuscan verse the prize.

You must not look, madam, for much meaning in these lines; they were intended only to run smoothly, and to be easily comprehended by the fair scholar who is learning our language. Still less must you show them: they are not calculated for the meridian of London, where you know I dread being represented as a shepherd. Pray let them think that I am wrapped up in Canada bills, and have all the pamphlets sent over about the colonies and the stamp-act.

I am very sorry for the accounts your ladyship gives me of lord Holland. He talks, I am told, of going to Naples: one would do a great deal for health, but I question if I could buy it at that expense. If Paris would answer his purpose, I should not wonder if he came hither—but to live with Italians must be woful, and would *ipso facto* make me ill. It is true I am a bad judge: I never tasted illness but the gout, which, tormenting as it is, I prefer to all other distempers: one knows the fit will end, will leave one quite well, and dispenses with the nonsense of physicians—and absurdity is more painful than pain: at least the pain of the gout never takes away my spirits, which the other does.

I have never heard from Mr. Chute this century, but am glad the gout is rather his excuse than the cause, and that it lies only in his pen. I am in too good humour to quarrel with any body—and consequently cannot be in haste to

see England, where at least one is sure of being quarrelled with. If they vex me, I will come back hither directly: and I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that your ladyship will not blame me.

Your most faithful humble servant.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, January 12, 1766.

I have received your letter by general Vernon, and another, to which I have writ an answer, but was disappointed of a conveyance I expected. You shall have it with additions, by the first messenger that goes; but I cannot send it by the post, as I have spoken very freely of some persons you name, in which we agree thoroughly. These few lines are only to tell you I am not idle in writing to you.

I almost repent having come hither; for I like the way of life and many of the people so well, that I doubt I shall feel more regret at leaving Paris than I expected. It would sound vain to tell you the honours and distinctions I receive, and how much I am in fashion; yet when they come from the handsomest women in France, and the most respectable in point of character, can one help being a little proud? If I was twenty

years younger, I should wish they were not quite so respectable. Madame de Brionne, whom I have never seen, and who was to have met me at supper last night at the charming madame d'Egmont's, sent me an invitation by the latter for Wednesday next. I was engaged, and hesitated. I was told, "*Comment! sçavez-vous que c'est qu'elle ne feroit pas pour toute la France?*" However, lest you should dread my returning a perfect old swain, I study my wrinkles, compare myself and my limbs to every plate of larks I see, and treat my understanding with at least as little mercy. Yet, do you know, my present fame is owing to a very trifling composition, but which has made incredible noise. I was one evening at madame Geoffrin's joking on Rousseau's affectations and contradictions, and said some things that diverted them. When I came home I put them into a letter, and showed it next day to Helvetius and the duc de Nivernois; who were so pleased with it, that, after telling me some faults in the language, which you may be sure there were, they encouraged me to let it be seen. As you know I willingly laugh at mountebanks *political* or literary, let their talents be ever so great, I was not averse. The copies have spread like wild-fire; *et me voici à la mode!* I expect the end of my reign at the end of the week with great composure. Here is the letter:

LE ROI DE PRUSSE A MONSIEUR ROUSSEAU.

MON CHER JEAN JACQUES,

Vous avez renoncé à Geneve votre patrie; vous vous êtes fait chasser de la Suisse, pays tant vanté dans vos écrits; la France vous a decreté. Venez donc chez moi: j'admire vos talents; je m'amuse de vos reveries, qui (soit dit en passant) vous occupent trop, et trop long tems. Il faut à la fin être sage et heureux. Vous avez fait assez parler de vous par des singularités peu convenables à un veritable grand homme. Demontrez à vos ennemis, que vous pouvez avoir quelquefois le sens commun: cela les fachera, sans vous faire tort. Mes états vous offrent une retraite paisible; je vous veux du bien, et je vous en ferai, si vous le trouvez bon. Mais si vous vous obstiniez à rejetter mon secours, attendez-vous que je ne le dirai à personne. Si vous persistez à vous creuser l'esprit pour trouver de nouveaux malheurs, choisissez les tels que vous voudrez. Je suis roi, je puis vous en procurer au grè de vos souhaits: et ce qui surement ne vous arrivera pas vis à vis de vos ennemis, je cesserai de vous persécuter quand vous cesserez de mettre votre gloire à l'être.

Votre bon ami,

FREDERIC.

The princesse de Ligne, whose mother was an Englishwoman, made a good observation to me last night. She said, *Je suis roi, je puis vous procurer de malheurs*, was plainly the stroke of an English pen. I said, then I had certainly not well imitated the character in which I wrote. You will say, I am a bold man to attack both Voltaire and Rousseau. It is true; but I shoot at their heel, at their vulnerable part.

I beg your pardon for taking up your time with these trifles. The day after to-morrow we go in cavalcade with the duchess[1] to her audience;[2] I have got my cravat and shammy shoes. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Paris, Jan. 18, 1766.

Dear Sir,

I had extreme satisfaction in receiving your letter, having been in great pain about you, and not knowing where to direct a letter. Favre[3] told me, you had had an accident, did not say what it

---

[1] Of Richmond.

[2] At Versailles as ambassadress.

[3] A servant of Mr. Walpole's left in London.

was, but that you was not come to town.[4] He received all the letters and parcels safe, for which I give you many thanks, and a thousand more for your kindness in thinking of them, when you was suffering so much. It was a dreadful conclusion of your travels; but I trust will leave no consequences behind it. The weather is by no means favourable for a recovery, if it is as severe in England as at Paris. We have had two or three days of fog, rather than thaw; but the frost is set in again as sharp as ever. I persisted in going about to churches and convents, till I thought I should have lost my nose and fingers. I have submitted at last to the season, and lie a-bed all the morning; but I hope in February and March to recover the time I have lost. I shall not return to England before the end of March, being determined not to hazard any thing. I continue perfectly well, and few things could tempt me to risk five months more of gout.

I will certainly bring you some pastils, and have them better packed, if it is possible. You know how happy I should be, if you would send me any other commission. As you say nothing of the Eton living, I fear that prospect has failed you; which gives me great regret, as it would

---

4 In disembarking at Dover, Mr. Cole met with an accident, that had confined him there three weeks to his bed.

give me very sensible pleasure to have you fixed somewhere (and not far from me) to your ease and satisfaction.

I am glad the cathedral of Amiens answered your expectation; so has the Sainte Chapelle mine; you did not tell me what charming enamels I should find in the anti-chapel. I have seen another vast piece, and very fine, of the constable Montmorenci at the marechale duchesse de Luxembourg's.

Rousseau is gone to England with Mr. Hume. You will very probably see a letter to Rousseau, in the name of the king of Prussia, writ to laugh at his affectations. It has made excessive noise here, and I believe quite ruined the author with many of the philosophers. When I tell you I was the author, it is telling you how cheap I hold their anger. If it does not reach you, you shall see it at Strawberry, where I flatter myself I shall see you this summer, and quite well. Adieu.

Dear sir,

Your ever obliged and faithful servant.

To Mr. GRAY.

Paris, Jan. 25, 1766.

I am much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice; and though it is late to thank you

for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted through this Siberian winter in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted without an under-waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can: it is not youth I court, but liberty; and I think making one's self tender, is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement, when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter, from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose *nothing* by this: you know my volubility, when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

By what I said of their religious or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality atheists — at least not the men

—Happily for them, poor souls! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal, because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman catholic religion, because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present too they are a little triumphant: the court has shown a little spirit, and the parliaments much less: but as the duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the parliament of Bretagne, the parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniences.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a

superiority. — I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country: if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed, enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness — seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship; and by a freedom and severity, which seems to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole

plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a week; has every thing new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams, aye, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or any body, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong: her judgment on every subject is as just as possible; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible: for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved, I don't mean by lovers, and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and ennui are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another and laugh at her; hate her because she has forty times more parts —and venture to hate her because she is not rich.

She has an old friend whom I must mention, a monsieur Pondevelle, author of the Fat puni, and the Complaisant, and of those pretty novels, the Comte de Cominge, the Siege of Calais, and les Malheurs de l'Amour. Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is: yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances: for instance, he has adapted the Regent's Daphnis and Chloe to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but is so old and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caractères de la danse*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters of love. With all this, he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation; seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humourist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can show him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's Rake's Progress, the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is ex-

cellent of the useful kind, and can be so when she pleases of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shows it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorrain, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the king. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure when it is her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the king to carry on a course of paying debts or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made *dame du palais* to the queen; and the very next day this princess of Lorrain was seen riding backwards with madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the king was stabbed and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted d'Argenson, whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, By all means. Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The king recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and la marechale inherited part of the mistress's credit. —— I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads that approach to good ones, and who luckily for us was dis-

graced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. He employed Pondevelle to make a song on the Pompadour: it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the king that he had poisoned her predecessor madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *sçavante*, mistress of the prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is gallant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible too, and has a measured eloquence that is just and pleasing—but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and, though a *sçavante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of monsieur de Nivernois, for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels. It requires the greatest curiosity,

or the greatest habitude, to discover the smallest connection between the sexes here. No familiarity, but under the veil of friendship, is permitted, and love's dictionary is as much prohibited, as at first sight one should think his ritual was. All you hear, and that pronounced with nonchalance, is, that *monsieur un tel* has had *madame une telle.* The duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre, but, as madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué par tout; guerrier manqué, ambassadeur manqué, homme d'affaires manqué*, and *auteur manqué* — no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué.* He would think freely, but has some ambition of being governor to the dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former out-chatters the duke of Newcastle; and the latter, madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependent admirers, and madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

The duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes, and is a little model in wax-work, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in the most elegant turn and

propriety of expression. Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Every body loves it, but its husband, who prefers her own sister the duchesse de Grammont, an Amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him—But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character—but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing, the marechale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good-breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable,

as mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont, they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. That *passe-par-tout*, called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself—Yes, like queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing-cross, and have risen in the Fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival hère in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wild-fire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had like to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he

owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs; but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect: — but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince or a learned canary-bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the princess of Talmond, the queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat, a foot-stool, and a chamber-pot in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week, of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chesnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want any thing else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my Sevigné researches but the frost. The abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack

Livry. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March: I shall be there by the end of it.

Yours ever.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, Feb. 3, 1766.

I HAD the honour of writing to your ladyship on the 4th and 12th of last month, which I only mention, because the latter went by the post, which I have found is not always a safe conveyance.

I am sorry to inform you, madam, that you will not see madame Geoffrin this year, as she goes to Poland in May. The king has invited her, promised her an apartment exactly in her own way, and that she shall see nobody but whom she chooses to see. This will not surprise you, madam; but what I shall add, will; though I must beg your ladyship not to mention it even to her, as it is an absolute secret here, as she does not know that I know it, and as it was trusted to me by a friend of yours. In short, there are thoughts of sending her with a public character, or at least with a commission from hence — a very extraor-

dinary honour, and I think never bestowed but on the marechale de Guèbriant. As the Dussons have been talked of, and as madame Geoffrin has enemies, its being known might prevent it; and it might make her uneasy that it was known. I should have told it to no mortal but your ladyship; but I could not resist giving you such a pleasure. In your answer, madam, I need not warn you not to specify what I have told you.

My favour here continues; and favour never displeases. To me too it is a novelty, and I naturally love curiosities. However, I must be looking towards home, and have perhaps only been treasuring up regret. At worst, I have filled my mind with a new set of ideas; some resource to a man who was heartily tired of his old ones. When I tell your ladyship that I play at whisk, and can bear even French music, you will not wonder at any change in me. Yet I am far from pretending to like every body or every thing I see. There are some chapters on which I still fear we shall not agree; but I will do your ladyship the justice to own, that you have never said a syllable too much in behalf of the friends to whom you was so good as to recommend me. Madame d'Egmont, whom I have mentioned but little, is one of the best women in the world, and, though not at all striking at first, gains upon one much. Colonel Gordon, with this letter, brings you, madam, some more seeds from her. I have a box of po-

matums for you from madame de Boufflers, which shall go by the next conveyance that offers. As he waits for my parcel, I can only repeat how much I am

Your ladyship's
most obliged and faithful humble servant.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Feb. 4, 1766.

I WRITE on small paper, that the nothing I have to say may look like a letter. Paris, that supplies me with diversions, affords me no news. England sends me none, on which I care to talk by the post. All seems in confusion; but I have done with politics!

The marriage of your cousins puts me in mind of the two owls, whom the vizier in some eastern tale told the sultan were treating on a match between their children, on whom they were to settle I don't know how many ruined villages. Trouble not your head about it. Our ancestors were rogues, and so will our posterity be.

Madame Roland has sent to me, by lady Jerningham, to beg my works. She shall certainly have them when I return to England; but how comes she to forget that you and I are friends? or does she think that all Englishmen quarrel on

party? If she does, methinks she is a good deal in the right, and it is one of the reasons why I have bid adieu to politics, that I may not be expected to love those I hate, and hate those I love. I supped last night with the duchess de Choiseul, and saw a magnificent robe she is to wear to-day for a great wedding between a Biron and a Boufflers. It is of blue satin, embroidered all over in a mosaic, diamond wise, with gold: in every diamond is a silver star edged with gold, and surrounded with spangles in the same way; it is trimmed with double sables, crossed with frogs and tassels of gold; her head, neck, breast, and arms, covered with diamonds. She will be quite the fairy queen, for it is the prettiest little reasonable amiable Titania you ever saw; but Oberon does not love it. He prefers a great mortal Hermione, her sister. I long to hear that you are lodged in Arlington-street, and invested with your green livery; and I love lord Beaulieu for his *cudom*. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Sunday, Feb. 23.

I CANNOT know that you are in my house, and not say, you are welcome. Indeed you are, and I am

heartily glad you are pleased there. I have neither matter nor time for more, as I have heard of an opportunity of sending this away immediately with some other letters. News do not happen here as in London; the parliaments meet, draw up a remonstrance, ask a day for presenting it, have the day named a week after, and so forth. At their rate of going on, if Methusalem was first president, he would not see the end of a single question. As your histories are somewhat more precipitate, I wait for their coming to some settlement, and then will return; but if the old ministers are to be replaced, bastille for bastille, I think I had rather stay where I am. I am not half so much afraid of any power, as the French are of Mr. Pitt. Adieu!

Yours most faithfully.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Paris, Feb. 28, 1766.

Dear Sir,

As you cannot, I believe, get a copy of the letter to Rousseau, and are impatient for it, I send it you; though the brevity of it will not answer your expectation. It is no answer to any of his works, and is only a laugh at his affectations. I hear he does not succeed in England, where sin-

gularities are no curiosity. Yet he must stay there, or give up all his pretensions. To quit a country where he may live at ease, and unpersecuted, will be owning that tranquillity is not what he seeks. If he again seeks persecution, who will pity him? I should think even bigots would let him alone, out of contempt.

I have executed your commission in a way that I hope will please you. As you tell me you have a blue cup and saucer, and a red one, and would have them completed to six, without being all alike, I have bought one other blue, one other red, and two sprigged, in the same manner, with colours; so you will have just three pair, which seems preferable to six odd ones; and which, indeed, at nineteen livres a-piece, I think I could not have found.

I shall keep pretty near to the time I proposed returning; though I am a little tempted to wait for the appearance of leaves. As I may never come hither again, I am disposed to see a little of their villas and gardens, though it will vex me to lose spring and lilac-tide at Strawberry. The weather has been so bad, and continues so cold, that I have not yet seen all I intend in Paris. To-day I have been to the Plaine de Sablon, by the Bois de Boulogne, to see a horse-race, rid in person by the count Lauragais and lord Forbes. All Paris was in motion by nine o'clock this morning, and the coaches and crowds were innumerable at so

novel a sight. Would you believe it, that there was an Englishman to whom it was quite as new? That Englishman was I, though I live within two miles of Hounslow; have been fifty times in my life at Newmarket, and have passed through it at the time of the races, I never before saw a complete one. I once went from Cambridge on purpose; saw the beginning, was tired, and went away. If there was to be a review in Lapland, perhaps I might see a review too; which yet I have never seen. Lauragais was distanced at the second circuit. What added to the singularity was, that at the same instant his brother was gone to church to be married. But as Lauragais is at variance with his father and wife, he chose this expedient to shew he was not at the wedding. Adieu,

Dear sir,

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, March 3, 1766.

I WRITE because I ought, and because I have promised you I would, and because I have an opportunity by Monsieur de Lillebonne, and in spite of a better reason for being silent, which is, that I have nothing to say. People marry, die, and are

promoted here, about whom neither you nor I care a straw. No truly, and I am heartily tired of them, as you may believe when I am preparing to return. There is a man in the next room actually nailing my boxes; yet it will be the beginning of April before I am at home. I have not had so much as a cold in all this Siberian winter, and I will not venture tempting the gout by lying in a bad inn, till the weather is warmer. I wish too to see a few leaves out at Versailles, &c. If I stayed till August I could not see many, for there is not a tree twenty miles, that is not hacked and hewed, till it looks like the stumps that beggars thrust into coaches to excite charity and miscarriages.

I am going this evening in search of madame Roland; I doubt we shall both miss each other's lilies and roses: she may have got some pionies in their room, but mine are replaced with crocuses.

I love lord Harcourt for his civility to you; and I would fain see you situated under the greenwood-tree, even by a compromise.

You may imagine I am pleased with the defeat, hisses, and mortification of George Grenville, and the more by the disappointment it has occasioned here. If you have a mind to vex them thoroughly, you must make Mr. Pitt minister. They have not forgot him, whatever we have done.

The king has suddenly been here this morning to hold a *lit de justice*: I don't yet know the particulars, except that it was occasioned by some

bold remonstrances of the parliament on the subject of that of Bretagne. Louis told me when I waked, that the duke de *Chevreuil*, the governor of Paris, was just gone by in great state. I long to chat with Mr. Chute and you in the blue room at Strawberry: though I have little to write, I have a great deal to say. How do you like his new house? has he no gout? Are your cousins Cortez and Pizarro heartily mortified that they are not to roast and plunder the Americans? Is goody Carlisle disappointed at not being appointed grand-inquisitor? Adieu! I will not seal this till I have seen or missed madame Roland.

Yours ever.

P. S. I have been prevented going to madame Roland, and must defer giving an account of her by this letter.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Paris, March 10, 1766.

THERE are two points, madam, on which I must write to your ladyship, though I have been confined these three or four days with an inflammation in my eyes. My watchings and revellings had, I doubt, heated my blood, and prepared it to receive a stroke of cold, which in truth was amply admi-

nistered. We were two-and-twenty at the mare-chale du Luxembourg's, and supped in a temple rather than in a hall. It is vaulted at top with gods and goddesses, and paved with marble; but the god of fire was not of the number.—However, as this is neither of my points, I shall say no more of it.

I send your ladyship lady Albemarle's box, which madame Geoffrin brought to me herself yesterday. I think it very neat and charming, and it exceeds the commission but by a guinea and half. It is lined with wood between the two golds, as the price and necessary size would not admit metal enough without, to leave it of any solidity.

The other point I am indeed ashamed to mention so late. I am more guilty than even about the scissors. Lord Hertford sent me word a fortnight ago, that an ensigncy was vacant, to which he should recommend Mr. Fitzgerald. I forgot both to thank him and to acquaint your ladyship, who probably know it without my communication. I have certainly lost my memory! This is so idle and young, that I begin to fear I have acquired something of *the fashionable man*, which I so much dreaded. Is it to England then that I must return to recover friendship and attention? I literally wrote to lord Hertford, and forgot to thank him. Sure I did not use to be so abominable! I cannot account for it; I am as black as ink, and must turn—*methodist* to fancy that repentance can wash

me white again. No, I will not; for then I may sin again, and trust to the same nostrum.

I had the honour of sending your ladyship the funeral sermon on the dauphin, and a tract to laugh at sermons:

Your bane and antidote are both before you.

The first is by the archbishop of Toulouse,[1] who is thought the first man of the clergy. It has some sense, no pathetic, no eloquence, and, I think, clearly no belief in his own doctrine. The latter is by the abbé Coyer, written livelily, upon a single idea; and though I agree upon the inutility of the remedy he rejects, I have no better opinion of that he would substitute. Preaching has not failed, from the beginning of the world till to-day, because inadequate to the disease, but because the disease is incurable. If one preached to lions and tigers, would it cure them of thirsting for blood, and sucking it when they have an opportunity? No; but when they are whelped in the Tower, and both caressed and beaten, do they turn out a jot more tame when they are grown up? So far from it, all the kindness in the world, all the attention, cannot make even a monkey (that is no beast of prey) remember a pair of scissors or an ensigncy.

Adieu, madam! and pray don't forgive me, till

---

[1] Brionne de Lomenie.

I have forgiven myself. I dare not close my letter with any professions; for could you believe them in one that you had so much reason to think

Your most obedient humble servant?

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Paris, March 12, 1766.

I CAN write but two lines, for I have been confined these four or five days with a violent inflammation in my eyes, and which has prevented my returning to madame Roland. I did not find her at home, but left your letter. My right eye is well again, and I have been to take the air.

How can you *ask leave* to carry any body to Strawberry? May not you do what you please with me and mine? Does not Arlington-street comprehend Strawberry? why don't you go and lie there if you like it? It will be, I think, the middle of April before I return; I have lost a week by this confinement, and would fain satisfy my curiosity entirely now I am here. I have seen enough, and too much of the people. I am glad you are upon civil terms with Habiculeo. The less I esteem folks, the less I would quarrel with them.

I don't wonder that Colman and Garrick write ill in concert, when they write ill separately; how-

ever I am heartily glad the Clive shines. Adieu. Commend me to Charles-street. Kiss Fanny, and Mufti, and Ponto for me, when you go to Strawberry; dear souls, I long to kiss them myself.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, March 21, 1766.

You make me very happy, in telling me you have been so comfortable in my house. If you would set up a bed there, you need never go out of it. I want to invite you, not to expel you. April the tenth my pilgrimage will end, and the fifteenth or sixteenth you may expect to see me, not much fattened with the flesh-pots of Egypt, but almost as glad to come amongst you again as I was to leave you.

Your madame Roland is not half so fond of me as she tells me; I have been twice at her door, left your letter and my own direction, but have not received so much as a message to tell me she is sorry she was not at home. Perhaps this is her first vision of Paris, and it is natural for a Frenchwoman to have her head turned with it; though what she takes for rivers of emerald, and hotels of ruby and topaz, are to my eyes, that have been purged with euphrasy and rue, a filthy stream, in which every thing is washed without being

cleaned, and dirty houses, ugly streets, worse shops, and churches loaded with bad pictures. Such is the material part of this paradise; for the corporeal, if madame Roland admires it, I have nothing to say; however I shall not be sorry to make one at lady Frances Elliot's. Thank you for admiring my deaf old woman; if I could bring my old blind one with me, I should resign this paradise as willingly as if it was built of opal, and designed by a fisherman, who thought that what makes a fine necklace would make a finer habitation.

We did not want your sun; it has shone here for a fortnight with all its lustre; but yesterday a north wind, blown by the czarina herself I believe, arrived, and declared a month of March of full age. This morning it snowed; and now clouds of dust are whisking about the streets and quays, edged with an east wind, that gets under one's very shirt. I should not be quite sorry if a little of it tapped my lilacs on their green noses, and bade them wait for their master.

The princess of Talmond sent me this morning a picture of two pug-dogs, and a black and white greyhound, wretchedly painted. I could not conceive what I was to do with this daub, but in her note she warned me not to hope to keep it. It was only to imprint on my memory the size, and features, and spots of Diana, her departed greyhound, in order that I might get her exactly such another. Don't you think my memory will re-

turn well stored, if it is littered with defunct lap-dogs. She is so devout, that I did not dare send her word, that I am not possessed of a twig of Jacob's broom, with which he streaked cattle as he pleased.

T'other day in the street I saw a child in a leading-string, whose nurse gave it a farthing for a beggar; the babe delivered its mite with a grace, and a twirl of the hand. I don't think your cousin T * * *'s first grandson will be so well bred. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, April 3, 1766.

One must be just to all the world; madame Roland, I find, has been in the country, and at Versailles, and was so obliging as to call on me this morning, but I was so disobliging as not to be awake. I was dreaming dreams; in short, I had dined at Livry; yes, yes, at Livry, with a Langlade and de la Rochefoucaulds. The abbey is now possessed by an abbé de Malherbe, with whom I am acquainted, and who had given me a general invitation. I put it off to the last moment, that the *bois* and *allées* might set off the scene a little, and contribute to the vision; but it did not want it. Livry is situated in the forêt

de Bondi, very agreeably on a flat, but with hills near it, and in prospect. There is a great air of simplicity, and rural about it, more regular than our taste, but with an old-fashioned tranquillity, and nothing of *colifichet*. Not a tree exists that remembers the charming woman, because in this country an old tree is a traitor, and forfeits its head to the crown; but the plantations are not young, and might very well be as they were in her time. The abbé's house is decent and snug; a few paces from it is the sacred pavilion built for madame de Sevigné by her uncle, and much as it was in her day; a small saloon below for dinner, then an arcade, but the niches now closed, and painted in fresco with medallions of her, the Grignan, the Fayette, and the Rochefoucauld. Above, a handsome large room, with a chimney-piece in the best taste of Louis the fourteenth's time; a holy family in good relief over it, and the cypher of her uncle Coulanges; a neat little bed-chamber within, and two or three clean little chambers over them. On one side of the garden, leading to the great road, is a little bridge of wood, on which the dear woman used to wait for the courier, that brought her daughter's letters. Judge with what veneration and satisfaction I set my foot upon it! If you will come to France with me next year, we will go and sacrifice on that sacred spot together.

On the road to Livry I passed a new house,

on the pilasters of the gate to which were two sphynxes in stone, with their heads coquetly reclined, straw hats, and French cloaks slightly pinned, and not hiding their bosoms. I don't know whether I or Memphis would have been more diverted.

I shall set out this day se'nnight, the tenth, and be in London about the fifteenth or sixteenth, if the wind is fair. Adieu;

Yours ever.

P. S. I need not say, I suppose, that this letter is to Mr. Chute too.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, April 6, 1766.

IN a certain city of Europe[1] it is the custom to wear slouched hats, long cloaks, and high capes. Scandal and the government called this dress *going in mask*, and pretended that it contributed to assassination. An ordonnance was published, commanding free-born hats to be cocked, cloaks to be shortened, and capes laid aside. All the world

---

[1] This account alludes to the insurrection at Madrid, on the attempt of the court to introduce the French dress in Spain.

obeyed for the first day; but the next, every thing returned into its old channel. In the evening a tumult arose, and cries of God bless the king! God bless the kingdom! but confusion to the prime minister.[2] — The word was no sooner given, but his house was beset, the windows broken, and the gates attempted. The guards came and fired on the *weavers*[3] of cloaks. The weavers returned the fire, and many fell on each side. As the hour of supper approached and the mob grew hungry, they recollected a tax upon bread, and demanded the *repeal.* The king yielded to both requests, and hats and loaves were set at liberty. The people were not contented, and still insisted on the permission of murdering the first minister; though his majesty assured his faithful commons that the minister was never consulted on acts of government, and was only his private friend, who sometimes called upon him in an evening to drink a glass of wine and talk botany. The people were incredulous, and continued in mutiny when the last letters came away.

If you should happen to suppose, as I did, that this *history* arrived in London, do not be alarmed; for it was at Madrid; and a nation who has borne

---

[2] Squillace, an Italian, whom the king was obliged to banish.

[3] Alluding to the mobs of silk-weavers which had taken place in London.

the inquisition cannot support a cocked hat!—So necessary it is for governors to know when lead or a feather will turn the balance of human understandings, or will not.

I should not have entrenched on lord George's[4] province of sending you news of revolutions, but he is at Aubigné;[5] and I thought it right to advertise you in time, in case you should have a mind to send a bale of slouched hats to the support of the mutineers. As I have worn a flapped hat all my life, when I have worn any at all, I think myself qualified, and would offer my service to command them; but being persuaded that you are a faithful observer of treaties, though a friend to repeals, I shall come and receive your commands in person. In the mean time I cannot help figuring what a pompous protest my lord Lyttelton might draw up in the character of an old grandee against the revocation of the act for cocked hats.

Lady Ailesbury forgot to send me word of your recovery, as she promised; but I was so lucky as to hear it from other hands. Pray take care of yourself, and do not imagine that you are as weak as I am, and can escape the scythe, as I do by being low: your life is of more consequence. If

---

[4] Lord George Lennox, only brother to the duke of Richmond.

[5] The duke of Richmond's country seat in France.

you don't believe me, step into the street and ask the first man you meet.

This is Sunday, and Thursday is fixed for my departure; unless the Clairon should return to the stage on Tuesday se'nnight, as is said; and I do not know whether I should not be tempted to borrow two or three days more, having never seen her: yet my lilacs pull hard, and I have not a farthing left in the world. Be sure you do not leave a cranny open for George Grenville to wriggle in, till I have got all my things out of the custom-house. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, April 8, 1766.

I SENT you a few lines by the post yesterday, with the first accounts of the insurrection at Madrid. I have since seen Stahramberg, the Imperial minister, who has had a courier from thence; and if lord Rochford has not sent one, you will not be sorry to know more particulars. The mob disarmed the invalids; stopped all coaches, to prevent Squillace's flight; and meeting the duke de Medina Celi, forced him and the duke d'Arcos to carry their demands to the king. His most frightened majesty granted them directly; on

which his highness the people dispatched a monk with their demands in writing, couched in four articles: the diminution of the gabel on bread and oil; the revocation of the ordonnance on hats and cloaks; the banishment of Squillace; and the abolition of some other tax, I don't know what. The king signed all; yet was still forced to appear in a balcony, and promise to observe what he had granted. Squillace was sent with an escort to Carthagena, to embark for Naples, and the first commissioner of the treasury appointed to succeed him; which does not look much like observation of the conditions. Some say Ensenada is recalled, and that Grimaldi is in no good odour with the people. If the latter and Squillace are dismissed, we get rid of two enemies.

The tumult ceased on the grant of the demands; but the king retiring that night to Aranjuez, the insurrection was renewed the next morning, on pretence that this flight was a breach of the capitulation. The people seized the gates of the capital, and permitted nobody to go out. In this state were things when the courier came away. The ordonnance against going in disguise looks as if some suspicions had been conceived; and yet their confidence was so great as not to have 2000 guards in the town. The pitiful behaviour of the court makes one think that the Italians were frightened, and that the Spanish part of the ministry were not sorry it took that turn. As I

suppose there is no great city in Spain which has not at least a bigger bundle of grievances than the capital, one shall not wonder if the pusillanimous behaviour of the king encourages them to redress themselves too.

There is what is called a change of the ministry here; but it is only a crossing over and figuring in. The duc de Praslin has wished to retire for some time; and for this last fortnight there has been much talk of his being replaced by the duc d'Aiguillon, the duc de Nivernois, &c.; but it is plain, though not believed till *now*, that the duc de Choiseul is all-powerful. To purchase the stay of his cousin Praslin, on whom he can depend, and to leave no cranny open, he has ceded the marine and colonies to the duc de Praslin, and taken the foreign and military department himself. His cousin is besides named *chef du conseil des finances;* a very honourable, very dignified, and very idle place, and never filled since the duc de Bethune had it. Praslin's hopeful cub the viscount, whom you saw in England last year, goes to Naples, and the marquis de Durfort to Vienna —a cold, dry, proud man, with the figure and manner of lord Cornbury.

Great matters are expected to-day from the parliament, which re-assembles. A mousquetaire, his piece loaded with a *lettre de cachet*, went about a fortnight ago to the notary who keeps the parliamentary registers, and demanded them. They

were refused—but given up, on the *lettre de cachet* being produced. The parliament intends to try the notary for breach of trust, which I suppose will make his fortune; though he has not the merit of perjury like * * * * * *.

There have been insurrections at Bourdeaux and Toulouse, on the militia, and 27 persons were killed at the latter: but both are appeased. These things are so much in vogue, that I wonder the French do not dress *à la revolte.*

The queen is in a very dangerous way.

This will be my last letter; but I am not sure I shall set out before the middle of next week.

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 10, 1766.

At last I am come back, dear sir, and in good health. I have brought you four cups and saucers, one red and white, one blue and white, and two coloured; and a little box of pastils. Tell me whether and how I shall convey them to you; or whether you will, as I hope, come to Strawberry this summer, and fetch them yourself: but if you are in the least hurry, I will send them.

I flatter myself you have quite recovered your

accident, and have no remains of lameness. The spring is very wet and cold, but Strawberry alone contains more verdure than all France.

I scrambled very well through the custom-house at Dover, and have got all my china safe from *that* here in town. You will see the fruits when you come to Strawberry-hill. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Dear Sir,

If you wonder you have not received the China and pastils, I must tell you the reason. They were sent for late in the evening when I was not at home. The servant desired they might be ready by eight next morning, but did not come for them, but afterwards left word they were to go by the waggon. I knew that was not safe for the China, and would reduce the pastils to powder, and therefore did not send them. When you send for them, be so good as to let me have a day or two of notice, because I am never at home in an evening, and often out of town.

The cups certainly cost but nine livres a piece, and nineteen was a mistake.

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 13, 1766.

Dear Sir,

I am forced to do a very awkward thing, and send you back one of your letters, and what is still worse, opened. The case was this: I received your two at dinner, opened one and laid the other in my lap; but forgetting that I had taken one out of the first, I took up the wrong and broke it open, without perceiving my mistake, till I saw the words, *Dear Sister*. I give you my honour I read no farther, but had torn it too much to send it away. Pray excuse me; and another time I beg you will put an envelope, for you write just where the seal comes; and besides, place the seals so together, that though I did not quite open the fourth letter, yet it stuck so to the outer seal, that I could not help tearing it a little.

Your things shall be ready whenever they are called for. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, May 25, 1766.

When the weather will please to be in a little better temper, I will call upon you to perform your promise; but I cannot in conscience invite you to a fire-side. The Guerchys and French dined here last Monday, and it rained so that we could no more walk in the garden than Noah could. I came again to-day, but shall return to town to-morrow, as I hate to have no sun in May, but what I can make with a peck of coals.

I know no news, but that the duke of Richmond is secretary of state, and that your cousin North has refused the vice-treasurer of Ireland. It cost him bitter pangs, not to preserve his virtue, but his vicious connections. He goggled his eyes, and groped in his money pocket, more than half consented; nay, so much more, that when he got home he wrote an excuse to lord Rockingham, which made it plain that he thought he had accepted. As nobody was dipped deeper in the warrants and prosecution of Wilkes, there is no condoling with the ministers on missing so foul a bargain. They are only to be pitied, that they can purchase nothing but damaged goods.

So my lord Grandison is dead! Does the general inherit much?

Have you heard the great loss the church of England has had! It is not avowed, but hear the evidence and judge. On Sunday last George Selwyn was strolling home to dinner at half an hour after four. He saw my lady Townshend's coach stop at Caraccioli's chapel. He watched, saw her go in; her footman laughed; he followed. She went up to the altar, a woman brought her a cushion; she knelt, crossed herself, and prayed. He stole up, and knelt by her. Conceive her face, if you can, when she turned and found his close to her. In his most demure voice, he said, "Pray, madam, how long has your ladyship left the pale of our church?" She looked furies, and made no answer. Next day he went to her, and she turned it off upon curiosity; but is any thing more natural? No, she certainly means to go armed with every viaticum, the church of England in one hand, methodism in the other, and the host in her mouth.

Have you ranged your forest, and seen your lodge yourself? I could almost wish it may not answer, and that you may cast an eye towards our neighbourhood. My lady Shelburne has taken a house here, and it has produced a *bon-mot* from Mrs. Clive. You know my lady Suffolk is *deaf*, and I have talked much of a charming old passion I have at Paris, who is *blind;* "Well," said the Clive, "if the new countess is but *lame*, I shall

have no chance of ever seeing you." Good night.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 20, 1766.

I DON'T know when I shall see you, but therefore must not I write to you? yet I have as little to say as may be. I could cry through a whole page over the bad weather. I have but a lock of hay, you know; and I cannot get it dry, unless I bring it to the fire. I would give half-a-crown for a pennyworth of sun. It is abominable to be ruined in coals in the middle of June.

What pleasure have you to come! there is a new thing published, that will make you split your cheeks with laughing. It is called the New Bath Guide. It stole into the world, and for a fortnight no soul looked into it, concluding its name was its true name. No such thing. It is a set of letters in verse, in all kind of verses, describing the life at Bath, and incidentally every thing else; but so much wit, so much humour, fun, and poetry, so much originality, never met together before. Then the man has a better ear than Dryden or Handel. *A propos* to Dryden, he has burlesqued

his St. Cecilia, that you will never read it again without laughing. There is a description of a milliner's box in all the terms of landscape, *painted lawns and chequered shades*, a Moravian ode, and a methodist ditty, that are incomparable, and the best names that ever were composed. I can say it by heart though a quarto, and if I had time would write it you down; for it is not yet reprinted, and not one to be had.

There are two new volumes too of Swift's correspondence, that will not amuse you less in another way, though abominable, for there are letters of twenty persons now alive; fifty of lady Betty Germain, one that does her great honour, in which she defends her friend my lady Suffolk, with all the spirit in the world, against that brute, who hated every body that he hoped would get him a mitre, and did not. * * * *

* * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * *

His own journal sent to Stella during the four last years of the queen is a fund of entertainment. You will see his insolence in full colours, and, at the same time, how daily vain he was of being noticed by the ministers he affected to treat arrogantly. His panic at the Mohocks is comical; but what strikes one, is bringing before one's eyes the incidents of a curious period. He goes to the rehearsal of Cato, and says the *drab* that acted

Cato's daughter could not say her part. This was only Mrs. Oldfield. I was saying before George Selwyn, that this journal put me in mind of the present time, there was the same indecision, irresolution, and want of system, but I added, "There is nothing new under the sun:" "No," said Selwyn, "nor under the grandson."

My lord Chesterfield has done me much honour: he told Mrs. Anne Pitt that he would subscribe to any politics I should lay down. When she repeated this to me, I said, "Pray tell him I have laid down politics."

I am got into puns, and will tell you an excellent one of the king of France, though it does not spell any better than Selwyn's. You must have heard of count Lauragais, and his horse-race, and his quacking his horse till he killed it. At his return the king asked him what he had been doing in England? "Sire, *j'ai appris à penser*"—"*Des chevaux?*" replied the king.

Good night! I am tired, and going to bed.

Yours ever.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HERVEY.

Strawberry-hill, June 28, 1766.

IT is consonant to your ladyship's long experienced goodness, to remove my error as soon as

you could. In fact, the same post that brought madame d'Aiguillon's letter to you, brought me a confession from madame du Deffand of her guilt.[1] I am not the less obliged to your ladyship for *informing* against the true criminal. It is well for me however that I hesitated, and did not, as monsieur de Guerchy pressed me to do, constitute myself prisoner. What a ridiculous vain-glorious figure I should have made at Versailles, with a laboured letter and my present! I still shudder when I think of it, and have scolded madame du Deffand black and blue. However, I feel very comfortable; and though it will be imputed to my own vanity, that I showed the box as madame de Choiseul's present, I resign the glory, and submit to the shame with great satisfaction. I have no pain in receiving this present from madame du Deffand, and must own have great pleasure that nobody but she could write that most charming of all letters. Did not lord Chesterfield think it so, madam? I doubt our friend Mr. Hume must allow that not only madame de Boufflers, but Voltaire himself, could not have written so well.

[1] Madame du Deffand had sent Mr. Walpole a snuff-box, in which was a portrait of madame de Sevigné, accompanied by a letter written in her name from the Elysian-fields, and addressed to Mr. Walpole, who did not at first suspect madame du Deffand as the author, but thought both the present and letter had come from the duchess of Choiseul.

When I give up madame de Sevigné herself, I think his sacrifices will be trifling.

Pray, madam, continue your waters; and, if possible, wash away that original sin, the gout. What would one give for a little rainbow to tell one, one should never have it again! Well, but then one should have a burning fever — for I think the greatest comfort that good-natured divines give us is, that we are not to be drowned any more, in order that we may be burnt. It will not at least be this summer; here is nothing but haycocks swimming round me. If it should cease raining by Monday se'nnight, I think of dining with your ladyship at Old Windsor; and if Mr. Bateman presses me mightily, I may take a bed there.

As I have a waste of paper before me, and nothing more to say, I have a mind to fill it with a translation of a tale that I found lately in the Dictionnaire d'Anecdotes, taken from a German author. The novelty of it struck me, and I put it into verse —— ill-enough; but, as the old duchess of Rutland used to say of a lie, it will do for news into the country.

From Time's usurping power, I see,
Not Acheron itself is free.
His wasting hand my subjects feel,
Grow old, and wrinkle though in hell.
Decrepit is Alecto grown,
Megæra worn to skin and bone;

And t'other beldam is so old,
She has not spirits left to scold.
Go, Hermes, bid my brother Jove
Send three new furies from above.
To Mercury thus Pluto said:
The winged deity obey'd.

It was about the self-same season,
That Juno, with as little reason,
Rung for her abigail; and you know,
Iris is chamber-maid to Juno.
Iris, d'ye hear? Mind what I say,
I want three maids — inquire — No, stay!
Three virgins — Yes, unspotted all;
No characters equivocal.
Go find me three, whose manners pure
Can envy's sharpest tooth endure.
The goddess curtsey'd, and retir'd;
From London to Pekin inquir'd;
Search'd huts and palaces —— in vain;
And, tir'd, to heaven came back again.
Alone! are you return'd alone?
How wicked must the world be grown!
What has my profligate been doing?
On earth has he been spreading ruin?
Come, tell me all —— Fair Iris sigh'd,
And thus disconsolate replied:
'Tis true, O queen! three maids I found,
The like are not on Christian ground;
So chaste, severe, immaculate,
The very name of man they hate:
These — but, alas! I came too late;
For Hermes had been there before;
In triumph off to Pluto bore
Three sisters, whom yourself would own
The true supports of virtue's throne.

To Pluto! — Mercy! cried the queen,
What can my brother Pluto mean?
Poor man! he dotes, or mad he sure is!
What can he want them for? — Three furies.

You will say I am an *infernal* poet; but every body cannot write as they do *aux champs Elysées*. Adieu, madam!

Yours most faithfully.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 10, 1766.

Don't you think a complete year enough for any administration to last? One, who at least can remove them, though he cannot make them, thinks so; and, accordingly, yesterday notified that he had sent for Mr. Pitt. Not a jot more is known; but as this set is sacrificed to their resolution of having nothing to do with lord Bute, the new list will probably not be composed of such hostile ingredients. The arrangement I believe settled in the outlines; if it is not, it may still never take place: it will not be the first time this egg has been addled. One is very sure that many people on all sides will be displeased, and I think no side quite contented. Your cousins, the house of Yorke, lord George Sackville, Newcastle, and lord Rockingham, will certainly not be of the

elect. What lord Temple will do, or if any thing will be done for George Grenville, are great points of curiosity. The plan will probably be, to pick and cull from all quarters, and break all parties, as much as possible. From this moment I date the wane of Mr. Pitt's glory; he will want the thorough-bass of drums and trumpets, and is not made for peace. The dismission of a most popular administration, a leaven of Bute, whom too he can never trust, and the numbers he will discontent, will be considerable objects against him.

For my own part, I am much pleased, and much more diverted. I have nothing to do but to sit by and laugh, a humour you know I am apt to indulge. You shall hear from me again soon.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 21, 1766.

You may strike up your sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer; for Mr. Pitt comes in, and lord Temple does not. Can I send you a more welcome affirmative or negative? My sackbut is not very sweet, and here is the ode I have made for it:—

When Britain heard the woeful news,
That Temple was to be minister,
To look upon it could she choose
But as an omen most sinister?

But when she heard he did refuse,
In spite of lady Chat his sister,
What could she do, but laugh, O muse?
And so she did, till she —— her.

If that snake had wriggled in, he would have drawn after him the whole herd of vipers; his brother Demogorgon and all. 'Tis a blessed deliverance.

The changes I should think now would be few. They are not yet known; but I am content already, and shall go to Strawberry to-morrow, where I shall be happy to receive you and Mr. John any day after Sunday next, the twenty-seventh, and for as many days as ever you will afford me. Let me know your mind by the return of the post. Strawberry is in perfection: the verdure has all the bloom of spring; the orange trees are loaded with blossoms, the gallery all sun and gold, Mrs. Clive all sun and vermilion — in short, come away to

Yours ever.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, and I hate to steal and not tell, that my ode is imitated from Fontaine.

To DAVID HUME, Esq.[1]

Arlington-street, July 26, 1766.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR set of literary friends are what a set of literary men are apt to be, exceedingly absurd. They hold a consistory to consult how to argue with a madman; and they think it very necessary for your character to give them the pleasure of seeing Rousseau exposed, not because he has provoked you, but them. If Rousseau prints, you must; but I certainly would not till he does.

I cannot be precise as to the time of my writing the king of Prussia's letter, but I do assure you with the utmost truth that it was several days before you left Paris, and before Rousseau's arrival there, of which I can give you a strong proof; for I not only suppressed the letter while you staid there, out of delicacy to you; but it was the reason why, out of delicacy to myself, I did not go to see him, as you often proposed to me, thinking it wrong to go and make a cordial visit to a man,

---

[1] On the celebrated quarrel between Hume and Rousseau, D'Alembert, and the other literary friends of the former, met at Paris, and were unanimous in advising him to publish the particulars. This Hume at first refused, but determined to collect them, and for that purpose had written to Mr. Walpole respecting the pretended letter from the king of Prussia.

with a letter in my pocket to laugh at him. You are at full liberty, dear sir, to make use of what I say in your justification, either to Rousseau or any body else. I should be very sorry to have you blamed on my account; I have a hearty contempt of Rousseau, and am perfectly indifferent what the literati of Paris think of the matter. If there is any fault, which I am far from thinking, let it lie on me. No parts can hinder my laughing at their possessor, if he is a mountebank. If he has a bad and most ungrateful heart, as Rousseau has shown in your case, into the bargain, he will have my scorn likewise, as he will of all good and sensible men. You may trust your sentence to such, who are as respectable judges as any that have pored over ten thousand more volumes.

Yours most sincerely.

P. S. I will look out the letter and the dates as soon as I go to Strawberry-hill.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, Sept. 18, 1766.

DEAR SIR,

I AM exceedingly obliged to you for your very friendly letter, and hurt at the absurdity of the newspapers that occasioned the alarm. Sure I

am not of consequence enough to be lied about! It is true I am ill, have been extremely so, and have been ill long, but with nothing like paralytic, as they have reported me. It has been this long disorder alone that has prevented my profiting of your company at Strawberry, according to the leave you gave me of asking it. I have lived upon the road between that place and this, never settled there, and uncertain whether I should go to Bath or abroad. Yesterday se'nnight I grew exceedingly ill indeed, with what they say has been the gout in my stomach, bowels, back, and kidneys. The worst seems over, and I have been to take the air to-day, for the first time, but bore it so ill, that I don't know how soon I shall be able to set out for Bath, whither they want me to go immediately, As that journey makes it very uncertain when I shall be at Strawberry again, and as you must want your cups, and pastils, will you tell me if I can convey them to you any way safely?

Excuse my saying more to-day, as I am so faint and weak; but it was impossible not to acknowledge your kindness the first minute I was able. Adieu,

Dear sir,

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 23, 1766.

I AM this moment come hither with Mr. Chute, who has shewed me your most kind and friendly letter, for which I give you a thousand thanks. It did not surprise me, for you cannot alter.

I have been most extremely ill; indeed never well since I saw you. However I think it is over, and that the gout is gone without leaving a codicil in my foot. Weak I am to the greatest degree, and no wonder. Such explosions make terrible havoc in a body of paper. I shall go to the Bath in a few days, which they tell me will make my quire of paper hold out a vast while! as to that, I am neither credulous nor earnest. If it can keep me from pain and preserve me the power of motion, I shall be content. Mr. Chute, who has been good beyond measure, goes with me for a few days. A thousand thanks and compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Whetenhall and Mr. John, and excuse my writing more, as I am a little fatigued with my little journey.

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Bath, October 2, 1766.

I arrived yesterday at noon, and bore my journey perfectly well, except that I had the head-ach all yesterday; but it is gone to-day, or at least made way for a little giddiness which the water gave me this morning at first. If it does not do me good very soon, I shall leave it; for I dislike the place exceedingly, and am disappointed in it. Their new buildings that are so admired, look like a collection of little hospitals; the rest is detestable; and all crammed together, and surrounded with perpendicular hills that have no beauty. The river is paltry enough to be the Seine or Tyber. Oh! how unlike my lovely Thames!

I met my lord Chatham's coach yesterday full of such Grenville-looking children, that I shall not go to see him this day or two; and to-day I spoke to lady Rockingham in the street. My lords chancellor and president are here, and lord and lady Powis. Lady Malpas arrived yesterday. I shall visit miss Rich to-morrow. In the next apartment to mine lodges * * * * * *. I have not seen him some years; and he is grown either mad or superannuated, and talks without cessation or coherence: you would think all the articles in a dictionary were prating together at once. The Bedfords are expected this week. There are forty

thousand others that I neither know nor intend to know. In short it is living in a fair, and I am heartily sick of it already. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Bath, October 5, 1766.

Yes, thank you, I am quite well again; and if I had not a mind to continue so, I would not remain here a day longer, for I am tired to death of the place. I sit down by the waters of Babylon, and weep, when I think of thee, oh Strawberry! The elements certainly agree with me, but I shun the gnomes and salamanders, and have not once been at the rooms. Mr. Chute stays with me till Tuesday; when he is gone, I do not know what I shall do; for I cannot play at cribbage by myself, and the alternative is to see my lady Vane open the ball, and glimmer at fifty-four. All my comfort is, that I lodge close to the cross bath, by which means I avoid the pump-room and all its works. We go to dine and see Bristol to-morrow, which will terminate our sights, for we are afraid of your noble cousins, at Badminton; and as Mrs. Allen is dead, and Warburton entered upon the premises, you may swear we shall not go thither.

Lord Chatham, the late and present chancellors,

and sundry more, are here, and their graces of Bedford expected. I think I shall make your Mrs. Trevor and lady Lucy a visit, but it is such an age since we met, that I suppose we shall not know one another by sight. Adieu! These watering places, that mimic a capital, and add vulgarisms and familiarities of their own, seem to me like abigails in cast gowns, and I am not young enough to take up with either.

Yours ever.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Bath, October 10, 1766.

I AM impatient to hear that your charity to me has not ended in the gout to yourself—all my comfort is, if you have it, that you have good lady Brown to nurse you.

My health advances faster than my amusement. However, I have been at one opera, Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls with charming voices, that sing hymns, in parts, to Scotch ballad tunes; but indeed so long, that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew how much time they had before them. The chapel is very neat, with true Gothic windows (yet I am not converted); but I was glad to see that luxury is creeping in

upon them before persecution: they have very neat mahogany stands for branches, and brackets of the same in taste. At the upper end is a broad *hautpas* of four steps, advancing in the middle; at each end of the broadest part are two of *my* eagles, with red cushions for the parson and clerk. Behind them rise three more steps, in the midst of which is a third eagle for pulpit. Scarlet armed chairs to all three. On either hand a balcony for elect ladies. The rest of the congregation sit on forms. Behind the pit, in a dark niche, is a plain table within rails; so you see the throne is for the apostle. Wesley is a lean elderly man, fresh-coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a *soupçon* of curl at the ends. Wondrous clean, but as evidently an actor as Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast, and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it, for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence in it; but towards the end he exalted his voice, and acted very vulgar enthusiasm; decried learning, and told stories, like Latimer, of the fool of his college, who said, "I *thanks* God for every thing." Except a few from curiosity, and *some honourable women*, the congregation was very mean. There was a Scotch countess of B * * *, who is carrying a pure rosy vulgar face to heaven, and who asked miss Rich, if that was *the author of the poets*. I believe she meant me and the Noble Authors.

The Bedfords came last night. Lord Chatham was with me yesterday two hours; looks and walks well, and is in excellent political spirits.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Bath, October 18, 1766.

WELL, I went last night to see lady Lucy and Mrs. Trevor, was let in, and received with great kindness. I found them little altered; lady Lucy was much undressed, but looks better than when I saw her last, and as well as one could expect; no shyness, nor singularity, but very easy and conversable. They have a very pretty house, with two excellent rooms on a floor, and extremely well furnished. You may be sure your name was much in request. If I had not been engaged, I could have staid much longer with satisfaction; and if I am doomed, as probably I shall be, to come hither again, they would be a great resource to me, for I find much more pleasure now in renewing old acquaintances, than in forming new.

The waters do not benefit me so much as at first; the pains in my stomach return almost every morning, but do not seem the least allied to the gout. This decrease of their virtue is not near so great a disappointment to me as you might imagine; for

I am so childish as not to think health itself a compensation for passing my time very disagreeably. I can bear the loss of youth heroically, provided I am comfortable, and can amuse myself as I like. But health does not give one the sort of spirits that make one like diversions, public places, and mixed company. Living here is being a shopkeeper, who is glad of all kinds of customers; but does not suit me, who am leaving off trade. I shall depart on Wednesday, even on the penalty of coming again. To have lived three weeks in a fair appears to me a century! I am not at all in love with their country, which so charms every body. Mountains are very good frames to a prospect, but here they run against one's nose, nor can one stir out of the town without clambering. It is true one may live as retired as one pleases, and may always have a small society. The place is healthy, every thing is cheap, and the provisions better than ever I tasted. Still I have taken an insupportable aversion to it, which I feel rather than can account for; I do not think you would dislike it; so you see I am just in general, though very partial as to my own particular.

You have raised my curiosity about lord Scarsdale's, yet I question whether I shall ever take the trouble of visiting it. I grow every year more averse to stirring from home, and putting myself out of my way. If I can but be tolerably well at Strawberry, my wishes are bounded. If I am to

live at watering-places, and keep what is called *good hours*, life itself will be very indifferent to me. I do not talk very sensibly, but I have a contempt for that fictitious character styled philosophy; I feel what I feel, and say I feel what I do feel. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Bath, October 18, 1766.

You have made me laugh, and somebody else makes me stare. How can one wonder at any thing he does, when he knows so little of the world? I suppose the next step will be to propose me for groom of the bed-chamber to the new duke of Cumberland. But why me? Here is that hopeful young fellow sir John Rushout, the oldest member of the house, and, as extremes meet, very proper to begin again; why overlook him? However, as the secret is kept from me myself, I am perfectly easy about it. I shall call to-day or to-morrow to ask his commands, but certainly shall not obey those you mention.

The waters certainly are not so beneficial to me as at first: I have almost every morning my pain in my stomach. I do not pretend this to be the cause of my leaving Bath. The truth is, I cannot

bear it any longer. You laugh at my regularity; but the contrary habit is so strong in me, that I cannot continue such sobriety. The public rooms, and the Loo, where we play in a circle, like the hazard on twelfth-night, are insupportable. This coming into the world again, when I am so weary of it, is as bad and ridiculous as moving an address would be. I have no affectation, for affectation is a monster at nine-and-forty; but if I cannot live quietly, privately, and comfortably, I am perfectly indifferent about living at all. I would not kill myself, for that is a philosopher's affectation, and I will come hither again, if I must; but I shall always drive very near, before I submit to do any thing I do not like. In short, I must be as foolish as I please, as long as I can keep without the limits of absurdity. What has an old man to do but to preserve himself from parade on one hand, and ridicule on the other? Charming youth may indulge itself in either, may be censured, will be envied, and has time to correct. Adieu!

Yours ever.

Monday evening.

You are a delightful manager of the house of commons, to reckon 540, instead of 565! Sandwich was more accurate in lists, and would not have miscounted 25, which are something in a division.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 22, 1766.

THEY may say what they will, but it does one ten times more good to leave Bath than to go to it. I may sometimes drink the waters, as Mr. Bentley used to say I invited company hither that I did not care for, that I might enjoy the pleasure of their going away. My health is certainly mended, but I did not feel the satisfaction of it till I got home. I have still a little rheumatism in one shoulder, which was not dipped in Styx, and is still mortal; but while I went to the rooms, or staid in my chambers in a dull court, I thought I had twenty complaints. I don't perceive one of them.

Having no companion, but such as the place afforded, and which I did not accept, my excursions were very few; besides that the city is so guarded with mountains, that I had not patience to be jolted like a pea in a drum, in my chaise alone. I did go to Bristol, the dirtiest great shop I ever saw, with so foul a river, that had I seen the least appearance of cleanliness, I should have concluded they washed all their linen in it, as they do at Paris. Going into the town, I was struck with a large Gothic building, coal black, and striped with white; I took it for the devil's cathedral. When I came nearer, I found it was an uniform

castle, lately built, and serving for stables and offices to a smart false Gothic house on the other side of the road.

The real cathedral is very neat, and has pretty tombs; besides the two windows of painted glass, given by Mrs. Ellen Gwyn. There is a new church besides of St. Nicholas, neat and truly Gothic; besides a charming old church at the other end of the town. The cathedral, or abbey at Bath is glaring and crowded with modern tablet-monuments; among others, I found two, of my cousin sir Erasmus Phillips, and of colonel Madan. Your cousin bishop Montagu decked it much. I dined one day with an agreeable family two miles from Bath, a captain Miller and his wife, and her mother, Mrs. Biggs. They have a small new-built house, with a bow-window, directly opposite to which the Avon falls in a wide cascade, a church behind it in a vale, into which two mountains descend, leaving an opening into the distant country. A large village with houses of gentry is on one of the hills to the left. Their garden is little but pretty, and watered with several small rivulets among the bushes. Meadows fall down to the road, and above the garden is terminated by another view of the river, the city, and the mountains. 'Tis a very diminutive principality with large pretensions.

I must tell you a quotation I lighted upon t'other day from Persius, the application of which

has much diverted Mr. Chute. You know my lord Milton, from nephew of the old usurer Damer of Dublin, has endeavoured to erect himself into the representative of the ancient barons Damory —*momento turbinis exit*

Marcus Dama.

A-propos, or rather not *à-propos*, I wish you joy of the restoration of the dukedom in your house, though I believe we both think it very hard upon my lady Beaulieu.

I made a second visit to lady Lucy and Mrs. Trevor, and saw the latter one night at the rooms. She did not appear to me so little altered as in the dusk of her own chamber. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To DAVID HUME, Esq.

Nov. 6, 1766.

Dear Sir,

You have, I own, surprised me by suffering your quarrel with Rousseau to be printed, contrary to your determination when you left London, and against the advice of all your best friends here; I may add, contrary to your own nature, which has always inclined you to despise literary squabbles, the jest and scorn of all men of sense. Indeed I

am sorry you have let yourself be over-persuaded, and so are all that I have seen who wish you well: I ought rather to use your own word *extorted.* You say your Parisian friends *extorted* your consent to this publication. I believe so. Your good sense could not approve what your good heart could not refuse. You add, that they told you *Rousseau had sent letters of defiance against you all over Europe.* Good God! my dear sir, could you pay any regard to such fustian? All Europe laughs at being dragged every day into these idle quarrels, with which Europe only wipes its backside. Your friends talk as loftily as of a challenge between Charles the fifth and Francis the first. What are become of all the controversies since the days of Scaliger and Scioppius of Billingsgate memory? Why, they sleep in oblivion, till some Bayle drags them out of their dust, and takes mighty pains to ascertain the date of each author's death, which is of no more consequence to the world than the day of his birth. Many a country squire quarrels with his neighbour about game and manors, yet they never print their wrangles, though as much abuse passes between them as if they could quote all the Philippics of the learned.

You have acted, as I should have expected if you *would* print, with sense, temper, and decency, and, what is still more uncommon, with your usual modesty. I cannot say so much for your editors. But editors and commentators are seldom modest.

Even to this day that race ape the dictatorial tone of the commentators at the restoration of learning, when the mob thought that Greek and Latin could give men the sense which they wanted in their native languages. But *Europe* is now grown a little wiser, and holds these magnificent pretensions in proper contempt.

What I have said is to explain why I am sorry my letter makes a part of this controversy. When I sent it to you, it was for your justification; and had it been necessary, I could have added much more, having been witness to your anxious and boundless friendship for Rousseau. I told you, you might make what use of it you pleased. Indeed at that time I did not, could not think of its being printed, you seeming so averse to any publication on that head. However, I by no means take it ill, nor regret my part, if it tends to vindicate your honour.

I must confess that I am more concerned that you have suffered my letter to be curtailed; nor should I have consented to that if you had asked me. I guessed that your friends consulted your interest less than their own inclination to expose Rousseau; and I think their omission of what I said on that subject, proves I was not mistaken in my guess. My letter hinted too my contempt of learned men and their miserable conduct. Since I was to appear in print, I should not have been sorry that that opinion should have appeared at the same

time. In truth, there is nothing I hold so cheap as the generality of learned men; and I have often thought that young men ought to be made scholars, lest they should grow to reverence learned blockheads, and think there is any merit in having read more foolish books than other folks, which, as there are a thousand nonsensical books for one good one, must be the case of any man who has read much more than other people.

Your friend D'Alembert, who I suppose has read a vast deal, is, it seems, offended with my letter to Rousseau. He is certainly as much at liberty to blame it, as I was to write it. Unfortunately he does not convince me; nor can I think but that if Rousseau may attack all governments and all religions, I might attack him: especially on his affectation and affected misfortunes, which you and your editors have proved *are affected.* D'Alembert might be offended at Rousseau's ascribing my letter to him; and he is in the right. I am a very indifferent author; and there is nothing so vexatious to an indifferent author as to be confounded with another of the same class. I should be sorry to have his *eloges* and translations of scraps of Tacitus laid to me. However, I can forgive him any thing, provided he never translates me. Adieu! my dear sir; I am apt to laugh, you know, and therefore you will excuse me, though I do not treat your friends up to the pomp of their claims. They may treat me as freely; I shall not laugh

the less, and I promise you I will never enter into a controversy with them.

Yours most sincerely.

To DAVID HUME, Esq.

Arlington-street, Nov. 11, 1766.

INDEED, dear sir, it was not necessary to make me any apology. D'Alembert is certainly at liberty to say what he pleases of my letter; and undoubtedly you cannot think that it signifies a straw to me what he says. But how can you be surprised at his printing a thing that he sent you so long ago? All *my* surprise consists in your suffering him to curtail my letter to you, when you might be sure he would print his own at length. I am glad, however, that he has mangled mine: it not only shows his equity, but is the strongest presumption that he was conscious I guessed right, when I supposed he urged you to publish, from his own private pique to Rousseau.

What you surmise of his censuring my letter because I am a friend of madame du Deffand, is astonishing indeed, and not to be credited, unless you had suggested it. Having never thought him any thing like a *superior genius*, as you term him, I concluded his vanity was hurt by Rousseau's ascribing my letter to him; but to carry resent-

ment to a woman, to an old and blind woman, so far as to hate a friend of hers *qui ne lui avoit point fait de mal*, is strangely weak and lamentable. I thought he was a philosopher, and that philosophers were virtuous, upright men, who loved wisdom, and were above the little passions and foibles of humanity. I thought they assumed that proud title as an earnest to the world that they intended to be something more than mortal; that they engaged themselves to be patterns of excellence, and would utter no opinion, would pronounce no decision, but what they believed the quintessence of truth; that they always acted without prejudice and respect of persons. Indeed we know that the ancient philosophers were a ridiculous composition of arrogance, disputation, and contradictions; that some of them acted against all ideas of decency; that others affected to doubt of their own senses; that some, for venting unintelligible nonsense, pretended to think themselves superior to kings; that they gave themselves airs of accounting for all that we do and do not see — and yet, that no two of them agreed in a single hypothesis; that one thought fire, another water, the origin of all things; and that some were even so absurd, and impious, as to displace God, and enthrone matter in his place. I do not mean to disparage such wise men, for we are really obliged to them: they anticipated and helped us off with an exceeding deal of nonsense,

through which we might possibly have passed, if they had not prevented us. But when in this enlightened age, as it is called, I saw the term *philosophers* revived, I concluded the jargon would be omitted, and that we should be blessed with only the cream of sapience; and one had more reason still to expect this from any *superior genius*. But, alas! my dear sir, what a tumble is here! Your D'Alembert is a mere mortal oracle. Who but would have laughed, if, when the buffoon Aristophanes ridiculed Socrates, Plato had condemned the former, not for making sport with a great man in distress, but because Plato hated some blind old woman with whom Aristophanes was acquainted!

D'Alembert's conduct is the more unjust, as I never heard madame du Deffand talk of him above three times in the seven months that I passed at Paris; and never, though she does not love him, with any reflection to his prejudice. I remember, the first time I ever heard her mention his name, I said I had been told he was a good mimic, but could not think him a good writer. (Crawford remembers this, and it is a proof that I always thought of D'Alembert as I do now). She took it up with warmth, defended his parts, and said he was extremely amusing. For her quarrel with him, I never troubled my head about it one way or other, which you will not wonder at. You know in England we read their works, but seldom

or never take any notice of authors. We think them sufficiently paid if their books sell, and of course leave them to their colleges and obscurity, by which means we are not troubled with their vanity and impertinence. In France they spoil us; but that was no business of mine. I, who am an author, must own this conduct very sensible; for in truth we are a most useless tribe.

That D'Alembert should have omitted passages in which you was so good as to mention me with approbation, agrees with his peevishness, not with his philosophy. However, for God's sake do not reinstate the passages. I do not love compliments, and will never give my consent to receive any. I have no doubt of your kind intentions to me, but beg they may rest there. I am much more diverted with the philosopher D'Alembert's underhand dealings, than I should have been pleased with panegyric even from you.

Allow me to make one more remark, and I have done with this trifling business for ever. Your moral friend pronounces me ill-natured for laughing at an unhappy man who had never offended me. Rousseau certainly never did offend me. I believed, from many symptoms in his writings, and from what I had heard of him, that his love of singularity made him choose to invite misfortunes, and that he hung out many more than he felt. I, who affect no philosophy, nor pretend to more virtue than my neighbours, thought this ridiculous

in a man who is really a *superior genius*, and joked upon it in a few lines never certainly intended to appear in print. The sage D'Alembert reprehends this — and where? In a book published to expose Rousseau, and which confirms by serious proofs what I had hinted at in jest. What! does a philosopher condemn me, and in the very same breath, only with ten times more ill-nature, act exactly as I had done? Oh! but you will say, Rousseau had offended D'Alembert by ascribing the king of Prussia's letter to him. Worse and worse: if Rousseau is unhappy, a philosopher should have pardoned. Revenge is so unbecoming the *rex regum*, the man who is *præcipuè sanus — nisi cum pituita molesta est.* If Rousseau's misfortunes are affected, what becomes of my ill-nature? In short, my dear sir, to conclude as D'Alembert concludes his book, I do believe in the virtue of Mr. Hume, but not much in that of philosophers. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. It occurs to me, that you may be apprehensive of my being indiscreet enough to let D'Alembert learn your suspicions of him on madame du Deffand's account; but you may be perfectly easy on that head. Though I like such an advantage over him, and should be glad he saw this letter, and knew how little formidable I think him, I shall certainly not make an ill use of a pri-

vate letter, and had much rather wave any triumph, than give a friend a moment's pain. I love to laugh at an impertinent *sçavant*, but respect learning when joined to such goodness as yours, and never confound ostentation and modesty.

I wrote to you last Thursday; and, by lady Hertford's advice, directed my letter to Nine-Wells: I hope you will receive it.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Dec. 12, 1766.

PRAY what are you doing?
Or reading or feeding?
Or drinking or thinking?
Or praying or playing?
Or walking or talking?
Or riding about to your neighbours?

I AM sure you are not writing, for I have not had a word from you this century; nay, nor you from me. In truth we have had a most busy month, and many grumbles of a state-quake; but the session has however ended very triumphantly for the great earl. I mean, we are adjourned for the holidays for above a month, after two divisions of one hundred and sixty-six to forty-eight, and one hundred and forty to fifty-six. The earl chaffered for the Bedfords, and who so willing as they? How-

ever, the bargain went off, and they are forced to return to George Grenville. Lord Rockingham and the Cavendishes have made a jaunt to the same quarter, but could carry only eight along with them, which swelled that little minority to fifty-six. I trust and I hope it will not rise higher in haste. Your cousin, I hear, has been two hours with the earl, but to what purpose I know not. Nugent is made lord Clare, I think to no purpose at all.

I came hither to-day for two or three days, and to empty my head. The weather is very warm and comfortable. When do you move your tents southward? I left little like news in town, except politics. That pretty young woman, lady Fortrose, lady Harrington's eldest daughter, is at the point of death, killed, like Coventry and others, by white lead, of which nothing could break her. Lord Beauchamp is going to marry the second Miss Windsor. It is odd that those two ugly girls, though such great fortunes, should get the two best figures in England, him and lord Mount-Stuart.

The duke of York is erecting a theatre at his own palace, and is to play Lothario in the Fair Penitent himself. *A-propos*, have you seen that delightful paper composed out of scraps in the newspapers? I laughed till I cried, and literally burst out so loud, that I thought Favre, who was

waiting in the next room, would conclude I was in a fit; I mean the paper[1] that says,

> This day his majesty will go in state
> To fifteen notorious common prostitutes, &c. &c.

It is the newest piece of humour, except the Bath Guide, that I have seen of many years. Adieu! Do let me hear from you soon. How does brother John?

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 16, 1766.

I WROTE to you last post on the very day I ought to have received yours, but being at Strawberry, did not get it in time. Thank you for your offer of a doe; you know, when I dine at home here, it is quite alone, and venison frightens my little meal; yet as half of it is designed for *dimidium animæ meæ* Mrs. Clive (a pretty round half), I must not refuse it; venison will make such a figure at her Christmas gambols! only let me

---

[1] Cross-readings from the Public Advertiser, by Caleb Whitefoord.

know when and how I am to receive it, that she may prepare the rest of her banquet; I will convey it to her.

I don't like your wintering so late in the country. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 1767.

I AM going to eat some of your venison, and dare to say it is very good; I am sure you are, and thank you for it. Catharine, I do not doubt, is up to the elbows in currant jelly and gratitude.

I have lost poor Louis, who died last week at Strawberry. He had no fault but what has fallen upon himself, poor soul! drinking; his honesty and good-nature were complete; and I am heartily concerned for him, which I shall seldom say so sincerely.

There has been printed a dull complimentary letter to me on the quarrel of Hume and Rousseau. In one of the reviews they are so obliging as to say I wrote it myself; it is so dull, that I should think they wrote it themselves — a kind of abuse I should dislike much more than their criticism.

Are not you frozen, perished? How do you

keep yourself alive on your mountain? I scarce stir from my fire-side. I have scarce been at Strawberry for a day this whole Christmas, and there is less appearance of a thaw to-day than ever. There has been dreadful havoc at Margate and Aldborough, and along the coast. At Calais the sea rose above sixty feet perpendicular, which makes people conclude there has been an earthquake somewhere or other. I shall not think of my journey to France yet; I suffered too much with the cold last year at Paris, where they have not the least idea of comfortable, but sup in stone halls, with all the doors open.

Adieu! I must go dress for the drawing-room of the princess of Wales.

Yours ever.

To Dr. DUCAREL.

April 25th, 1767.

Mr. Walpole has been out of town, or should have thanked Dr. Ducarel sooner for the obliging favour of his most curious and valuable work,[1] which Mr. Walpole has read with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction. He will be very much

---

[1] Anglo-Norman Antiquities.

obliged to Dr. Ducarel if he will favour him with a set of the prints separate; which Mr. Walpole would be glad to put into his volumes of English Heads; and shall be happy to have an opportunity of returning these obligations.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, July 29, 1767.

MY DEAR LORD,

I AM very sorry that I must speak of a loss that will give you and lady Strafford concern; an essential loss to me, who am deprived of a most agreeable friend, with whom I passed here many hours. I need not say I mean poor lady Suffolk.[1] I was with her two hours on Saturday night; and indeed found her much changed, though I did not apprehend her in danger. I was going to say she complained — but you know she never did complain — of the gout and rheumatism all over her, particularly in her face. It was a cold night, and she sat below stairs when she should have been in bed; and I doubt this want of care was prejudicial. I sent next morning. She had a bad

---

[1] Henrietta Hobart countess of Suffolk. For a further account of her see the Reminiscences.

night; but grew much better in the evening. Lady Dalkeith came to her; and when she was gone, lady Suffolk said to lord Chetwynd, 'She would eat her supper in her bed-chamber.' He went up with her, and thought the appearances promised a good night: but she was scarce sat down in her chair, before she pressed her hand to her side, and died in half an hour.

I believe both your lordship and lady Strafford will be surprised to hear that she was by no means in the situation that most people thought. Lord Chetwynd and myself were the only persons at all acquainted with her affairs, and they were far from being even easy to her. It is due to her memory to say, that I never saw more strict honour and justice. She bore *knowingly* the imputation of being covetous, at a time that the strictest economy could by no means prevent her exceeding her income considerably. The anguish of the last years of her life, though concealed, flowed from the apprehension of not satisfying her few wishes, which were, not to be in debt, and to make a provision for miss H * * * *.[2] I can give your lordship strong instances of the sacrifices she tried to make to her principles. I have not yet heard if her will is opened; but it will surprise those who thought her rich. Lord

[2] Her great-niece.

Chetwynd's friendship to her has been unalterably kind and zealous, and is not ceased. He stays in the house with miss H * * * * till some of her family come to take her away. I have perhaps dwelt too long on this subject; but as it was not permitted me to do her justice when alive, I own I cannot help wishing that those who had a regard for her, may now at least know how much more she deserved it than even they suspected. In truth, I never knew a woman more respectable for her honour and principles, and have lost few persons in my life whom I shall miss so much.

I am, my dear lord, yours most sincerely.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 31, 1767.

I FIND one must cast you into debt, if one has a mind to hear of you. You would drop one with all your heart, if one would let you alone. Did not you talk of passing by Strawberry in June, on a visit to the bishop? I did not summon you, because I have not been sure of my own motions for two days together for these three months. At last all is subsided; the administration will go on pretty much as it was, with Mr. Conway for part of it. The fools and the rogues, or, if you like proper names, the R * * * ms and the G * * * s

have bungled their own game, quarrelled, and thrown it away.

Where are you? What are you doing? Where are you going or staying? I shall trip to Paris in about a fortnight, for a month or six weeks. Indeed I have had such a loss in poor lady Suffolk, that my autumns at Strawberry will suffer exceedingly, and will not be repaired by my lord Buckingham. I have been in pain too, and am not yet quite easy about my brother, who is in a bad state of health. Have you waded through or into lord Lyttelton? How dull one may be, if one will but take pains for six or seven-and-twenty years together! Except one day's gout, which I cured with the bootikins, I have been quite well since I saw you: nay, with a microscope you would perceive I am fatter. Mr. Hawkins saw it with his naked eye, and told me it was common for lean people to grow fat when they grow old. I am afraid the latter is more certain than the former, and I submit to it with a good grace. There is no keeping off age by sticking roses and sweet peas in one's hair, as Miss Chudleigh does still.

If you are not totally abandoned, you will send me a line before I go. The Clive has been desperately nervous, but I have convinced her it did not become her, and she has recovered her rubicundity. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Friday, Aug. 7, 1767.

As I am turned knight-errant, and going again in search of my old fairy, I will certainly transport your enchanted casket, and will endeavour to procure some talisman, that may secrete it from the eyes of those unheroic harpies, the officers of the custom-house. You must take care to let me have it before to-morrow se'nnight.

The house at Twickenham, with which you fell in love, is still unmarried; but they ask a hundred and thirty pounds a-year for it. If they asked one hundred and thirty thousand pounds for it, perhaps my lord Clive might snap it up; but that not being the case, I don't doubt but it will fall, and I flatter myself that you and it may meet at last upon reasonable terms. That of general Trapaud is to be had at fifty pounds a year, but with a fine on entrance of five hundred pounds. As I propose to return by the beginning of October, perhaps I may see you, and then you may review both. Since the loss of poor lady Suffolk, I am more desirous than ever of having you in my neighbourhood, as I have not a rational acquaintance left. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, Oct. 24, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

IT is an age since we have had any correspondence. My long and dangerous illness last year, with my journey to Bath: my long attendance in parliament all winter, spring, and to the beginning of summer; and my journey to France since, from whence I returned but last week, prevented my asking the pleasure of seeing you at Strawberry-hill.

I wish to hear that you have enjoyed your health, and shall be glad of any news of you. The season is too late, and the parliament too near opening, for me to propose a winter journey to you. If you should happen to think at all of London, I trust you would do me the favour to call on me. In short, this is only a letter of inquiry after you, and to show you that I am always

Most truly yours.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday, Nov. 1, 1767.

THE house is taken, that you wot of, but I believe you may have general Trapaud's for fifty pounds

a year, and a fine of two hundred and fifty, which is less by half, look you, than you was told at first. A jury of matrons, composed of lady Frances, my dame Bramston, lady Pembroke, and lady Carberry, and the merry Catholic lady Brown, have sat upon it, and decide that you should take it. But you must come and treat in person, and may hold the congress here. I hear lord Guildford is much better, so that the exchequer will still find you in funds. You will not dislike to hear, shall you, that Mr. Conway does not take the appointments of secretary of state. If it grows the fashion to give up above five thousand pounds a year, this ministry will last for ever, for I do not think the opposition will struggle for places without salaries. If my lord Ligonier does not go to heaven, or sir Robert Rich to the devil soon, our general will run considerably in debt; but he had better be too poor than too rich. I would not have him die like old Pulteney, loaded with the spoils of other families and the crimes of his own. Adieu! I will not write to you any more, so you may as well come.

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Dec. 19, 1767.

You are now I reckon settled in your new habitation:[1] I would not interrupt you in your journeyings, dear sir, but am not at all pleased that you are seated so little to your mind; and yet I think you will stay there. Cambridge and Ely are neighbourhoods to your taste, and if you do not again shift your quarters, I shall make them and you a visit: Ely I have never seen. I could have wished that you had preferred this part of the world; and yet, I trust, I shall see you here oftener than I have done of late. This, to my great satisfaction, is my last session of parliament, to which, and to politics, I shall ever bid adieu!

I did not go to Paris for my health, though I found the journey and the sea-sickness, which I had never experienced before, contributed to it greatly. I have not been so well for some years as I am at present, and if I continue to plump up as I do at present, I do not know but by the time we may meet, whether you may not discover, without a microscope, that I am really fatter. I went to make a visit to my dear old blind wo-

[1] Mr. Cole had lately removed from Blecheley, Bucks, to Waterbeche, near Cambridge.

man,[2] and to see some things I could not see in winter.

For the Catholic religion, I think it very consumptive. With a little patience, if Whitfield, Wesley, my lady Huntingdon, and that rogue Madan live, I do not doubt but we shall have something very like it here. And yet I had rather live at the end of a tawdry religion, than at the beginning; which is always more stern and hypocritic.

I shall be very glad to see your laborious work of the maps; you are indefatigable I know: I think mapping would try my patience more than any thing.

My Richard the third will go to press this week, and you shall have one of the first copies, which I think will be in about a month, if you will tell me how to convey it: direct to Arlington-street. Mr. Gray went to Cambridge yesterday se'nnight: I wait for some papers from him for my purpose.

I grieve for your sufferings by the inundation; but you are not only an hermit, but, what is better, a real philosopher. Let me hear from you soon.

Yours ever.

---

[2] Madame du Deffand.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, Feb. 1, 1768.

Dear Sir,

I have waited for the impression of my Richard, to send you the whole parcel together. This moment I have conveyed to Mr. Cartwright a large bundle for you, containing Richard the third, the four volumes of the new edition of the Anecdotes, and six prints of your relation Tuer. You will find his head very small: but the original was too inconsiderable to allow it to be larger. I have sent you no Patagonèans; for they are out of print: I have only my own copy, and could not get another. Pray tell me how, or what you heard of it: and tell me sincerely, for I did not know it had made any noise.

I shall be much obliged to you for the extract relating to the Academy of which a Walpole was president. I doubt if he was of our branch; and rather think he was of the younger and Roman Catholic branch.

Are you reconciled to your new habitation? Don't you find it too damp? and if you do, don't deceive yourself, and try to surmount it, but remove immediately. Health is the most important of all considerations. Adieu! dear sir,

Yours ever.

To Mr. GRAY.

Arlington-street, Feb. 18, 1768.

You have sent me a long and very obliging letter, and yet I am extremely out of humour with you. I saw *Poems* by *Mr. Gray* advertised: I called directly at Dodsley's to know if this was to be more than a new edition? He was not at home himself, but his foreman told me he thought there were some new pieces, and notes to the whole. It was very unkind, not only to go out of town without mentioning them to me, without showing them to me, but not to say a word of them in this letter. Do you think I am indifferent, or not curious, about what you write? I have ceased to ask you, because you have so long refused to show me any thing. You could not suppose I thought that you never write. No; but I concluded you did not intend, at least yet, to publish what you had written. As you did intend it, I might have expected a month's preference. You will do me the justice to own that I had always rather have seen your writings than have shown you mine, which you know are the most hasty trifles in the world, and which, though I may be fond of the subject when fresh, I constantly forget in a very short time after they are published. This would sound like affectation to others, but will not to you. It would be affected, even to you, to say I

am indifferent to fame——I certainly am not, but I am indifferent to almost any thing I have done to acquire it. The greater part are mere compilations; and no wonder they are, as you say, incorrect, when they are commonly written with people in the room, as Richard and the Noble Authors were. But I doubt there is a more intrinsic fault in them; which is, that I cannot correct them. If I write tolerably, it must be at once; I can neither mend nor add. The articles of lord Capel and lord Peterborough, in the second edition of the Noble Authors, cost me more trouble than all the rest together: and you may perceive that the worst part of Richard, in point of ease and style, is what relates to the papers you gave me on Jane Shore, because it was tacked on so long afterwards, and when my impetus was chilled. If some time or other you will take the trouble of pointing out the inaccuracies of it, I shall be much obliged to you: at present I shall meddle no more with it. It has taken its fate; nor did I mean to complain. I found it was condemned indeed before hand, which was what I alluded to. Since publication (as has happened to me before) the success has gone beyond my expectation.

Not only at Cambridge, but here, there have been people wise enough to think me too free with the king of Prussia! A newspaper has talked of my known inveteracy to him.—Truly, I love

him as well as I do most kings. The greater offence is my reflection on lord Clarendon. It is forgotten that I had overpraised him before. Pray turn to the new State Papers, from which, *it is said*, he composed his history. You will find they are the papers from which he did *not* compose his history. And yet I admire my lord Clarendon more than these pretended admirers do. But I do not intend to justify myself. I can as little satisfy those who complain that I do not let them know what *really did* happen. If this inquiry can ferret out any truth, I shall be glad. I have picked up a few more circumstances. I now want to know what Perkin Warbeck's proclamation was, which Speed in his history says is preserved by bishop Leslie. If you look in Speed, perhaps you will be able to assist me.

The duke of Richmond and lord Lyttelton agree with you, that I have not disculpated Richard of the murder of Henry VI. I own to you, it is the crime of which in my own mind I believe him most guiltless. Had I thought he committed it, I should never have taken the trouble to apologize for the rest. I am not at all positive or obstinate on your other objections, nor know exactly what I believe on many points of this story. And I am so sincere, that, except a few notes hereafter, I shall leave the matter to be settled or discussed by others. As you have written much too little, I have written a great

deal too much, and think only of finishing the two or three other things I have begun — and of those, nothing but the last volume of Painters is designed for the present public. What has one to do when turned fifty, but really think of *finishing?*

I am much obliged and flattered by Mr. Mason's approbation, and particularly by having had almost the same thought with him. I said, "People need not be angry at my excusing Richard; I have not diminished their fund of hatred, I have only transferred it from Richard to Henry."— Well, but I have found you close with Mason— No doubt, cry prating I, something will come out.[1]——Oh! no—leave us, both of you, to Annabellas and Epistles to Ferney, that give Voltaire an account of his own tragedies, to Macarony fables that are more unintelligible than Pilpay's are in the original, to Mr. Thornton's hurdy-gurdy poetry, and to Mr. * * * *, who has imitated himself worse than any fop in a magazine would have done. In truth, if you should abandon us, I could not wonder—When Garrick's prologues and epilogues, his own Cymons and farces, and the comedies of the fools that pay court to him, are the delight of the age, it does not deserve any thing better.

---

1 "I found him close with Swift"—"Indeed?"—"No doubt," Cries prating Balbus, "something will come out."

Pope's Epistle to Arbuthnot.

Pray read the new account of Corsica. What relates to Paoli will amuse you much. There is a deal about the island and its divisions that one does not care a straw for. The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like * * * *, has a rage of knowing any body that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about king Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too: but as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see he now is a little sick of Rousseau himself, but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will I am sure entertain you.

I will add but a word or two more. I am criticized for the expression *tinker up* in the preface. Is this one of those that you object to? I own I think such a low expression, placed to ridicule an absurd instance of wise folly, very forcible. Replace it with an elevated word or phrase, and to my conception it becomes as flat as possible.

George Selwyn says I may, if I please, write historic doubts on the present duke of G * * * * too. Indeed they would be doubts, for I know nothing certainly.

Will you be so kind as to look into Leslie de rebus Scotorum, and see if Perkin's proclamation

is there, and if there, how authenticated. You will find in Speed my reason for asking this.

I have written in such a hurry, I believe you will scarce be able to read my letter — and as I have just been writing French, perhaps the sense may not be clearer than the writing. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To Mr. GRAY.

Arlington-street, Friday night, Feb. 26.

I PLAGUE you to death, but I must reply a few more words. I shall be very glad to see in print, and to have those that are worthy see your ancient odes; but I was in hopes there were some pieces too that I had not seen. I am sorry there are not.

I troubled you about Perkin's proclamation, because Mr. Hume lays great stress upon it, and insists, that if Perkin affirmed his brother was killed, it must have been true, if he was true duke of York. Mr. Hume would have persuaded me that the proclamation is in Stowe, but I can find no such thing there; nor, what is more, in Casley's catalogue, which I have twice looked over carefully. I wrote to sir David Dalrymple in Scotland, to inquire after it, because I would produce it if I could, though it should make against me:

but he, I believe, thinking I inquired with the contrary view, replied very drily, that it was published at York, and was not to be found in Scotland. Whether he is displeased that I have plucked a hair from the tresses of their great historian; or whether, as I suspect, he is offended for king William; this reply was all the notice he took of my letter and book. I only smiled, as I must do when I find one party is angry with me on king William's, and the other on lord Clarendon's account.

The answer advertised is Guthrie's, who is furious that I have taken no notice of *his* History. I shall take as little of his pamphlet; but his end will be answered, if he sells that and one or two copies of his History. Mr. Hume, I am told, has drawn up an answer too, which I shall see, and, if I can, will get him to publish; for, if I should ever choose to say any thing more on this subject, I had rather reply to him than to hackney-writers: — to the latter, indeed, I never will reply. A few notes I have to add that will be very material; and I wish to get some account of a book that was once sold at Osborn's, that exists perhaps at Cambridge, and of which I found a memorandum t'other day in my note-book. It is called A Paradox, or Apology for Richard the third, by sir William Cornwallis. If you could discover it, I should be much obliged to you.

Lord Sandwich, with whom I have not ex-

changed a syllable since the general warrants, very obligingly sent me an account of the roll at Kimbolton; and has since, at my desire, borrowed it for me and sent it to town.[1] It is as long as my lord Lyttelton's History; but by what I can read of it (for it is both ill written and much decayed), it is not a roll of kings, but of all that have been possessed of, or been earls of Warwick: or have not — for one of the first earls is Æneas. How, or wherefore, I do not know, but amongst the first is Richard the third, in whose reign it was finished, and with whom it concludes. He is there again with his wife and son, and Edward the fourth, and Clarence and his wife, and Edward their son (who unluckily is a little old man), and Margaret countess of Salisbury, their daughter——But why do I say with these? There is every body else too — and what is most meritorious, the habits of all the times are admirably well observed from the most savage ages. Each figure is tricked with a pen, well drawn, but neither coloured nor shaded. Richard is straight, but thinner than my print; his hair short, and exactly curled in the same manner; not so handsome as mine, but what one might really believe intended for the same countenance, as drawn by

---

1 From this roll were taken the two plates of portraits in the Historic Doubts.

a different painter, especially when so small; for the figures in general are not so long as one's finger. His queen is ugly, and with just such a square forehead as in my print, but I cannot say like it. Nor, indeed, where forty-five figures out of fifty (I have not counted the number) must have been imaginary, can one lay great stress on the five. I shall, however, have these figures copied, especially as I know of no other image of the son. Mr. Astle is to come to me to-morrow morning to explain the writing.

I wish you had told me in what age your Franciscan friars lived; and what the passage in Comines is. I am very ready to make *amende honorable.*

Thank you for the notes on the Noble Authors. They shall be inserted when I make a new edition, for the sake of the trouble the person has taken, though they are of little consequence. Dodsley has asked me for a new edition; but I have little heart to undertake such work, no more than to mend my old linen. It is pity one cannot be born an ancient, and have commentators to do such jobs for one! Adieu!

Yours ever.

Saturday morning.

ON reading over your letter again this morning, I do find the age in which the friars lived — I read

and write in such a hurry, that I think I neither know what I read or say.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 12, 1768.

The house, &c. described in the enclosed advertisement I should think might suit you; I am sure its being in my neighbourhood would make me glad, if it did. I know no more than what you will find in this scrap of paper, nor what the rent is, nor whether it has a chamber as big as Westminster-hall; but as you have flown about the world, and are returned to your ark without finding a place to rest your foot, I should think you might as well inquire about the house I notify to you, as set out with your caravan to Great-worth, like a Tartar chief; especially as the laws of this country will not permit you to stop in the first meadow you like, and turn your horses to grazing, without saying by your leave.

As my senatorial dignity is gone, and the sight of my name is no longer worth threepence, I shall not put you to the expense of a cover, and I hope the advertisement will not be taxed, as I seal it to the paper. In short, I retain so much iniquity from the last infamous parliament that you see I

would still cheat the public. The comfort I feel in sitting peaceably here, instead of being at Lynn in the high fever of a contested election, which at best would end in my being carried about that large town like a figure of a pope at a bonfire, is very great. I do not think, when that function is over, that I shall repent my resolution. What could I see but sons and grandsons playing over the same knaveries, that I have seen their fathers and grandfathers act? Could I hear oratory beyond my lord Chatham's? Will there ever be parts equal to Charles Townshend's? Will George Grenville cease to be the most tiresome of beings? Will he not be constantly whining, and droning, and interrupting, like a cigala in a sultry day in Italy?

Guthrie has published two criticisms on my Richard; one abusive in the Critical Review; t'other very civil and even flattering in a pamphlet; both so stupid and contemptible, that I rather prefer the first, as making some attempt at vivacity; but in point of argument, nay, and of humour, at which he makes an effort too, both things are below scorn. As an instance of the former, he says, the duke of Clarence might die of drinking sack, and so be said to be drowned in a butt of malmsey; of the latter sort, are his calling the lady Bridget *lady Biddy*, and the duke of York *poor little fellow!* I will weary you with no more such stuff!

The weather is so very March, that I cannot enjoy my new holidays at Strawberry yet; I sit reading and writing close to the fire.

Sterne has published two little volumes, called Sentimental Travels. They are very pleasing, though too much dilated, and infinitely preferable to his tiresome Tristram Shandy, of which I never could get though three volumes. In these there is great good-nature and strokes of delicacy. Gray has added to his poems three ancient odes from Norway and Wales. The subjects of the two first are grand and picturesque, and there is *his* genuine vein in them; but they are not interesting, and do not, like his other poems, touch any passion. Our human feelings, which he masters at will in his former pieces, are here not affected. Who can care through what horrors a Runic savage arrived at all the joys and glories they could conceive, the supreme felicity of boozing ale out of the skull of an enemy in Odin's-hall? Oh! yes, just now perhaps these odes would be toasted at many a contested election. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, April 15, 1768.

MR. Chute tells me that you have taken a new house in Squireland, and have given yourself up for two years more to port and parsons. I am very angry, and resign you to the works of the devil or the church, I don't care which. You will get the gout, turn methodist, and expect to ride to heaven upon your own great toe. I was happy with your telling me how well you love me, and though I don't love loving, I could have poured out all the fullness of my heart to such an old and true friend; but what am I the better for it, if I am to see you but two or three days in the year? I thought you would at last come and while away the remainder of life on the banks of the Thames in gaiety and old tales. I have quitted the stage, and the Clive is preparing to leave it. We shall neither of us ever be grave: dowagers roost all around us, and you could never want cards or mirth. Will you end like a fat farmer, repeating annually the price of oats, and discussing stale newspapers? There have you got, I hear, into an old gallery, that has not been glazed since queen Elizabeth, and under the nose of an infant duke and duchess, that will understand you no more than if you wore a ruff and a coif, and talked to them of a call of ser-

jeants the year of the Spanish armada! Your wit and humour will be as much lost upon them, as if you talked the dialect of Chaucer; for with all the divinity of wit, it grows out of fashion like a fardingale. I am convinced that the young men at White's already laugh at George Selwyn's *bon-mots* only by tradition. I avoid talking before the youth of the age as I would dancing before them; for if one's tongue don't move in the steps of the day, and thinks to please by its old graces, it is only an object of ridicule, like Mrs. Hobart in her cotillon. I tell you we should get together, and comfort ourselves with reflecting on the brave days that we have known — not that I think people were a jot more clever or wise in our youth than they are now; but as my system is always to live in a vision as much as I can, and as visions don't increase with years, there is nothing so natural as to think one remembers what one does not remember.

I have finished my tragedy, but as you would not bear the subject, I will say no more of it, but that Mr. Chute, who is not easily pleased, likes it, and Gray, who is still more difficult, approves it. I am not yet intoxicated enough with it to think it would do for the stage, though I wish to see it acted: but as Mrs. Pritchard leaves the stage next month, I know nobody could play the countess; nor am I disposed to expose myself to the impertinences of that jacka-

napes Garrick, who lets nothing appear but his own wretched stuff, or that of creatures still duller, who suffer him to alter their pieces as he pleases. I have written an epilogue in character for the Clive, which she would speak admirably; but I am not so sure that she would like to speak it. Mr. Conway, lady Aylesbury, lady Lyttelton, and Miss Rich, are to come hither the day after to-morrow, and Mr. Conway and I are to read my play to them, for I have not strength enough to go through the whole alone.

My press is revived, and is printing a French play written by the old president Henault. It was damned many years ago at Paris, and yet I think is better than some that have succeeded, and much better than any of *our* modern tragedies. I print it to please the old man, as he was exceedingly kind to me at Paris; but I doubt whether he will live till it is finished. He is to have a hundred copies, and there are to be but a hundred more, of which you shall have one.

Adieu; though I am very angry with you, I deserve all your friendship, by that I have for you, witness my anger and disappointment.

Yours ever.

P. S. Send me your new direction, and tell me when I must begin to use it.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, April 16, 1768.

Well, dear sir, does your new habitation improve, as the spring advances? There has been dry weather and east wind enough to parch the fens. We find that the severe beginning of this last winter has made terrible havoc among the evergreens, though of old standing. Half my cypresses have been bewitched, and turned into brooms; and the laurustinus is every where perished. I am Goth enough to choose now and then to believe in prognostics; and I hope this destruction imports, that, though foreigners should take root here, they cannot last in this climate. I would fain persuade myself, that we are to be our own empire to eternity.

The duke of Manchester has lent me an invaluable curiosity: I mean invaluable to us antiquaries: but perhaps I have already mentioned it to you; I forget whether I have or no. It is the original roll of the earls of Warwick, as long as my gallery; and drawn by John Rous himself. Ay! and what is more, there are portraits of Richard III., his queen, and son; the two former corresponding almost exactly with my print; and a panegyric on the virtues of Richard, and a satire, upwards and downwards, on the illegal marriage of Edward IV. and on the extortions of Henry

VII. I have had these, and seven other portraits copied, and shall some time or other give plates of them. But I wait for an excuse; I mean till Mr. Hume shall publish a few remarks he has made on my book: they are very far from substantial; yet still better than any other trash that has been written against it; nothing of which deserves an answer.

I have long had thoughts of drawing up something for London like St. Foix's Rues de Paris, and have made some collections. I wish you would be so good, in the course of your reading, to mark down any passage to that end: as where any great houses of the nobility were situated; or in what street any memorable event happened. I fear the subject will not furnish much till later times, as our princes kept their courts up and down the country in such a vagrant manner.

I expect Mr. Gray and Mr. Mason to pass the day with me here to-morrow. When I am more settled here, I shall put you in mind of your promise to bestow more than one day on me.

I hope the methodist, your neighbour, does not, like his patriarch Whitfield, encourage the people to forge, murder, &c. in order to have the benefit of being converted at the gallows. That arch-rogue preached lately a funeral sermon on one Gibson, hanged for forgery, and told his audience, that he could assure them Gibson was now in heaven, and that another fellow, executed

at the same time, had the happiness of touching Gibson's coat as he was turned off. As little as you and I agree about a hundred years ago, I don't desire a reign of fanatics. Oxford has begun with these rascals, and I hope Cambridge will wake. I don't mean that I would have them persecuted, which is what they wish; but I would have the clergy fight them, and ridicule them. Adieu.

Dear sir,

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, June 6, 1768.

You have told me what makes me both sorry and glad![1] Long have I expected the appearance of Ely, and thought it at the eve of coming forth! Now you tell me it is not half written; but then

---

[1] This is in reply to one of Mr. Cole's letters, wherein he had informed Mr. Walpole, that he had undertaken to write the history of some of the bishops of Ely for the history of Ely cathedral, and requested some particulars relating to cardinal Lewis de Luxembourg; and to be informed the meaning of the French word, *sotalle* or *sotelle*. Mr. Cole also proposed to controvert an opinion of Mr. Walpole's respecting cardinal Morton.

I am rejoiced you are to write it. Pray do; the author is very much in the right to make you author for him. I cannot say you have addressed yourself quite so judiciously as he has. I never heard of cardinal Lewis de Luxembourg in my days, nor have a scrap of the history of Normandy, but Ducarel's tour to the conqueror's kitchen. But the best way will be to come and rummage my library yourself: not to set me to writing the lives of prelates: I shall strip them stark, and you will have them to reconsecrate. Cardinal Morton is at your service: pray say *for* him, and *of* me, what you please. I have very slender opinion of his integrity; but, as I am not spiteful, it would be hard to exact from you a less favourable account of him, than I conclude your piety will bestow on all his predecessors and successors. Seriously, you know how little I take contradiction to heart, and beg you will have no scruples about defending Morton. When I bestow but a momentary smile on the abuse of my answerers, I am not likely to stint a friend in a fair and obliging remark.

The man that you mention, who calls himself *Impartialis*, is, I suppose, some hackney historian, I shall never inquire whom, angry at being censured in the lump, and not named. I foretold he would drop his criticisms before he entered on Perkin Warbeck, which I knew he could not

answer: and so it happened. Good night to him!

Unfortunately I am no culinary antiquary: the bishop of Carlisle, who is, I have oft heard talk of a *sotelle*, as an ancient dish. He is rambling between London, Hagley, and Carlisle, that I do not know where to consult him: but if the book is not printed before winter, I am sure he could translate your bill of fare into modern phrase. As I trust I shall see you some time this summer, you might bring your papers with you, and we will try what we can make of them. Tell me, do, when it will be most convenient for you to come, from now to the end of October. At the same time I will beg to see the letters of the university to king Richard; and shall be still more obliged to you for the print of Jane Shore.[2] I have a very bad mezzotinto of her, either from the picture at Cambridge or Eton.

I wish I could return these favours by contributing to the decoration of your new old house: but, as you know, I erected an old house, not demolished one, I had no windows or frames for windows, but what I bespoke on purpose for the

[2] This appears, from the copy of Cole's previous letter, to have been an engraving done by Mr. Tyson of Bennet's College, from the picture in the provost's lodge.

places where they are. My painted glass was so exhausted, before I got through my design, that I was forced to have the windows in the gallery painted on purpose by Pecket. What scraps I have remaining are so bad, I cannot make you pay for the carriage of them; as I think there is not one whole piece: but you shall see them when you come hither; and I will search if I can find any thing for your purpose. I am sure I owe it you. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 15, 1768.

No, I cannot be so false as to say I am glad you are pleased with your situation. You are so apt to take root, that it requires ten years to dig you out again when you once begin to settle. As you go pitching your tent up and down, I wish you were still more a Tartar, and shifted your quarters perpetually. Yes, I will come and see you; but tell me first, when do your duke and duchess travel to the north? I know he is a very amiable lad, and I do not know that she is not as amiable a *laddess*, but I had rather see their house comfortably, when they are not there.

I perceive the deluge fell upon you, before it

reached us. It began here but on Monday last, and then rained near eight and forty hours without intermission. My poor hay has not a dry thread to its back. I have had a fire these three days. In short, every summer one lives in a state of mutiny and murmur, and I have found the reason: it is because we will affect to have a summer, and we have no title to any such thing. Our poets learnt their trade of the Romans, and so adopted the terms of their masters. They talk of shady groves, purling streams, and cooling breezes, and we get sore throats and agues with attempting to realize these visions. Master Damon writes a song, and invites miss Chloe to enjoy the cool of the evening, and the deuce a bit have we of any such thing as a cool evening. Zephyr is a north-east wind, that makes Damon button up to the chin, and pinches Chloe's nose till it is red and blue; and then they cry, *this is a bad summer*, as if we ever had any other. The best sun we have, is made of Newcastle coal, and I am determined never to reckon upon any other. We ruin ourselves with inviting over foreign trees, and make our houses clamber up hills to look at prospects. How our ancestors would laugh at us, who knew there was no being comfortable, unless you had a high hill before your nose, and a thick warm wood at your back! Taste is too freezing a commodity for us, and depend upon it, will go out of fashion again.

There is indeed a natural warmth in this country, which, as you say, I am very glad not to enjoy any longer; I mean the hot-house in St. Stephen's chapel. My own sagacity makes me very vain, though there was very little merit in it. I had seen so much of all parties, that I had little esteem left for any; it is most indifferent to me who is in or who is out, or which is set in the pillory, Mr. Wilkes or my lord Mansfield. I see the country going to ruin, and no man with brains enough to save it. That is mortifying; but what signifies who has the undoing it? I seldom suffer myself to think on this subject: *my* patriotism could do no good, and my philosophy can make me be at peace.

I am sorry you are likely to lose your poor cousin lady Hinchinbrook; I heard a very bad account of her when I was last in town. Your letter to madame Roland shall be taken care of; but as you are so scrupulous of making me pay postage, I must remember not to overcharge you, as I can frank my idle letters no longer; therefore, good night!

Yours ever.

P.S. I was in town last week, and found Mr. Chute still confined. He had a return in his shoulder, but I think it more rheumatism than gout.

To MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE.

Strawberry-hill, June 21, 1768.

SIR,

YOU read English with so much more facility than I can write French, that I hope you will excuse my making use of my own tongue to thank you for the honour of your letter. If I employed your language, my ignorance in it might betray me into expressions that would not do justice to the sentiments I feel at being so distinguished.

It is true, sir, I have ventured to contest the history of Richard the third, as it has been delivered down to us: and I shall obey your commands, and send it to you, though with fear and trembling; for though I have given it to the world, as it is called, yet, as you have justly observed, *that* world is comprised within a very small circle of readers—and undoubtedly I could not expect that you would do me the honour of being one of the number. Nor do I fear you, sir, only as the first genius in Europe, who have illustrated every science; I have a more intimate dependence on you than you suspect. Without knowing it, you have been my master, and perhaps the sole merit that may be found in my writings is owing to my having studied yours: so far, sir, am I from living in that state of

barbarism and ignorance with which you tax me when you say *que vous m'êtes peut-être inconnu.* I was not a stranger to your reputation very many years ago, but remember to have then thought you honoured our house by dining with my mother—though I was at school, and had not the happiness of seeing you: and yet my father was in a situation that might have dazzled eyes older than mine. The plain name of that father, and the pride of having had so excellent a father, to whose virtues truth at last does justice, is all I have to boast. I am a very private man, distinguished by neither dignities nor titles, which I have never done any thing to deserve—but as I am certain that titles alone would not have procured me the honour of your notice, I am content without them.

But, sir, if I can tell you nothing good of myself, I can at least tell you something bad: and after the obligation you have conferred on me by your letter, I should blush if you heard it from any body but myself. I had rather incur your indignation than deceive you. Some time ago I took the liberty to find fault in print with the criticisms you had made on our Shakespeare. This freedom, and no wonder, never came to your knowledge. It was in a preface to a trifling Romance, much unworthy of your regard, but which I shall send you, because I cannot accept even the honour of your correspondence, without making you judge whether I deserve it. I might retract, I might

beg your pardon; but having said nothing but what I thought, nothing illiberal or unbecoming a gentleman, it would be treating you with ingratitude and impertinence, to suppose that you would either be offended with my remarks, or pleased with my recantation. You are as much above wanting flattery, as I am above offering it to you. You would despise me, and I should despise myself — a sacrifice I cannot make, sir, even to you.

Though it is impossible not to know *you*, sir, I must confess my ignorance on the other part of your letter. I know nothing of the history of monsieur de Genonville, nor can tell whether it is true or false, as this is the first time I ever heard of it. But I will take care to inform myself as well as I can, and, if you allow me to trouble you again, will send you the exact account as far as I can obtain it. I love my country, but I do not love any of my countrymen that have been capable, if they have been so, of a foul assassination. I should have made this inquiry directly, and informed you of the result of it in this letter, had I been in London; but the respect I owe you, sir, and my impatience to thank you for so unexpected a mark of your favour, made me choose not to delay my gratitude for a single post. I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obliged and
most obedient humble servant.

To the EARL of STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, June 25, 1768.

You ordered me, my dear lord, to write to you, and I am always ready to obey you, and to give you every proof of attachment in my power: but it is a very barren season for all but cabalists, who can compound, divide, multiply N° 45 forty-five thousand different ways. I saw in the papers to-day, that somehow or other this famous number and the number of the beast in the Revelations is the same — an observation from which different persons will draw various conclusions. For my part, who have no ill wishes to Wilkes, I wish he was in Patmos, or the New Jerusalem, for I am exceedingly tired of his name. The only good thing I have heard in all this controversy was of a man who began his letter thus: "I take the Wilkes-and-liberty to assure you, &c."

I peeped at London last week, and found a tolerably full opera. But now the Birth-day is over, I suppose every body will go to waters and races till his majesty of Denmark arrives. He is extremely amorous; but stays so short a time, that the ladies who intend to be undone must not haggle. They must do their business in the twinkling of an allemande, or he will be flown. Don't you think he will be a little surprised, when he inquires for the seraglio in B * * * house, to

find, in full of all accounts, two old *Mecklenburgheresses?*

Is it true that * * * * is turned methodist? It will be a great acquisition to the sect to have their hymns set by Giardini. Pope Joan Huntingdon will be deposed, if the husband becomes first minister. I doubt too the saints will like to call at Canterbury and Winchester in their way to Heaven. My charity is so small, that I do not think their virtue a jot more obdurate than that of patriots.

We have had some severe rain; but the season is now beautiful, though scarce hot. The hay and the corn promise that we shall have no riots on their account. Those black dogs the whiteboys or coal-heavers are dispersed or taken; and I really see no reason to think we shall have another rebellion this fortnight. The most comfortable event to me is, that we shall have no civil war all the summer at Brentford. I dreaded two kings there; but the writ for Middlesex will not be issued till the parliament meets; so there will be no pretender against king Glynn.[1] As I love peace, and have done with politics, I quietly acknowledge the king *de facto;* and hope to pass and repass unmolested through his majesty's *long, lazy, lousy* capital.[2]

---

[1] Serjeant Glynn, member of parliament for Middlesex.

[2] Brentford

My humble duty to my lady Strafford and all her pheasants. I have just made two cascades; but my naiads are fools to Mrs. C * * * * or my lady S * * * *, and don't give me a gallon of water in a week. — Well, this is a very silly letter! But you must take the will for the deed. Adieu, my dear lord!

Your most faithful servant.

To MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE.

Strawberry-hill, July 27, 1768.

ONE can never, sir, be sorry to have been in the wrong, when one's errors are pointed out to one in so obliging and masterly a manner. Whatever opinion I may have of Shakespeare, I should think him to blame, if he could have seen the letter you have done me the honour to write to me, and yet not conform to the rules you have there laid down. When he lived, there had not been a Voltaire both to give laws to the stage, and to show on what good sense those laws were founded. Your art, sir, goes still farther: for you have supported your arguments, without having recourse to the best authority, your own works. It was my interest perhaps to defend barbarism and irregularity. A great genius is in the right, on the contrary, to show that when

correctness, nay when perfection is demanded, he can still shine, and be himself, whatever fetters are imposed on him. But I will say no more on this head; for I am neither so unpolished as to tell you to your face how much I admire you, nor, though I have taken the liberty to vindicate Shakespeare against your criticisms, am I vain enough to think myself an adversary worthy of you. I am much more proud of receiving laws from you, than of contesting them. It was bold in me to dispute with you even before I had the honour of your acquaintance; it would be ungrateful now when you have not only taken notice of me, but forgiven me. The admirable letter you have been so good as to send me, is a proof that you are one of those truly great and rare men, who know at once how to conquer and to pardon.

I have made all the inquiry I could into the story of M. de Jumonville; and though your and our accounts disagree, I own I do not think, sir, that the strongest evidence is in our favour. I am told we allow he was killed by a party of our men, going to the Ohio. Your countrymen say he was going with a flag of truce. The commanding officer of our party said M. de Jumonville was going with hostile intentions; and that very hostile orders were found after his death in his pocket. Unless that officer had proved that he had previous intelligence of those orders, I doubt he will not be justified by finding them

afterwards; for I am not at all disposed to believe that he had the foreknowledge of your hermit, who pitched the old woman's nephew into the river, because *ce jeune homme auroit assassiné sa tante dans un an.*

I am grieved that such disputes should ever subsist between two nations who have every thing in themselves to create happiness, and who may find enough in each other to love and admire. It is your benevolence, sir, and your zeal for softening the manners of mankind; it is the doctrine of peace and amity which you preach, that have raised my esteem for you even more than the brightness of your genius. France may claim you in the latter light, but all nations have a right to call you their countryman *du coté du cœur.* It is on the strength of that connection that I beg you, sir, to accept the homage of,

Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, August 9, 1768.

You are very kind, or else you saw into my mind, and knew that I have been thinking of writing to you, but had not a pen full of matter. True, I have been in town, but I am more likely to

learn news here; where at least we have it like fish, that could not find vent in London. I saw nothing there but the ruins of loo, lady Hertford's cribbage, and lord B * * *, like patience on a monument, smiling in grief. He is totally ruined, and quite charmed. Yet I heartily pity him. To Virginia he cannot be indifferent: he must turn their heads somehow or other. If his graces do not captivate them, he will enrage them to fury; for I take all his *douceur* to be enamelled on iron.

My life is most uniform and void of events, and has nothing worth repeating. I have not had a soul with me, but accidental company now and then at dinner. Lady Holderness, lady Ancram, lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Ann Pitt, and Mr. Hume, dined here the day before yesterday. They were but just gone, when George Selwyn, lord Bolinbroke, and sir William Musgrave, who had been at Hampton-court, came in, at nine at night, to drink tea. They told me, what I was very glad to hear, and what I could not doubt, as they had it from the duke of Grafton himself, that bishop Cornwallis goes to Canterbury. I feared it would be * * * *; but it seems he had secured all the back-stairs, and not the great stairs. As the last head of the church[1] had been on the midwife line,

[1] Thomas Secker, archbishop of Canterbury.

I suppose goody * * * * had hopes; and as he had been president of an atheistical club, to be sure Warburton did not despair. I was thinking it would make a good article in the papers, that three bishops had supped with Nancy Parsons at Vauxhall, in their way to Lambeth. I am sure * * * * would have been of the number; and * * * *, who told the duke of Newcastle, that if his grace had commanded the Blues at Minden they would have behaved better, would make no scruple to cry up her chastity.

The king of Denmark comes on Thursday; and I go to-morrow to see him. It has cost three thousand pounds to new-furnish an apartment for him at St. James's; and now he will not go thither, supposing it would be a confinement. He is to lodge at his own minister Dieden's.

Augustus Hervey, thinking it the *bel air*, is going to sue for a divorce from the Chudleigh. He asked lord B * * * t'other day, who was his proctor, as he would have asked for his tailor. The nymph has sent him word, that if he proves her his wife he must pay her debts; and she owes sixteen thousand pounds. This obstacle thrown in the way, looks as if she was not sure of being duchess of Kingston. The lawyers say, it will be no valid plea; it not appearing that she was Hervey's wife, and therefore the tradesmen could not reckon on his paying them.

Yes, it is my Gray, Gray the poet, who is made professor of modern history; and I believe it is worth 500*l.* a year. I knew nothing of it till I saw it in the papers; but believe it was Stonehewer that obtained it for him.

Yes, again; I use a bit of alum half as big as my nail, once or twice a week, and let it dissolve in my mouth. I should not think that using it oftener could be prejudicial. You should inquire; but as you are in more hurry than I am, you should certainly use it oftener than I do. I wish I could cure mylady Ailesbury too. Ice-water has astonishing effect on my stomach, and removes all pain like a charm. Pray, though the one's teeth may not be so white as formerly, nor t'other look in perfect health, let the Danish king see such good specimens of the last age — though, by what I hear, he likes nothing but the very present age. — However, sure you will both come and look at him: not that I believe he is a jot better than the apprentices that flirt to Epsom in a Timwhisky; but I want to meet you in town.

I don't very well know what I write, for I hear a caravan on my stairs, that are come to see the house; Margaret is chattering, and the dogs barking; and this I call retirement! and yet I think it preferable to your visit at Becket. Adieu! Let me know something more of your motions before you go to Ireland, which I think a strange

journey, and better compounded for: and when I see you in town I will settle with you another visit to Park-place.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Aug. 13, 1768.

I WONDERED, indeed, what was become of you, as I had offered myself to you so long ago, and you did not accept my bill; and now it is payable at such short notice, that as I cannot find Mr. Chute, nor know where he is, whether at your brother's or the Vine, I think I had better defer my visit till the autumn, when you say you will be less hurried, and more at leisure. I believe I shall go to Ragley the beginning of September, and possibly on to lord Strafford's, and therefore I may call on you, if it will not be inconvenient to you, on my return.

I came to town to see the Danish king. He is as diminutive as if he came out of a kernel in the Fairy Tales. He is not ill made, nor weakly made, though so small; and though his face is pale and delicate, it is not at all ugly, yet has a strong cast of the late king, and enough of the late prince of * * * * to put one upon one's guard not to be prejudiced in his favour. Still he has more royalty

than folly in his air; and, considering he is not twenty, is as well as one expects any king in a puppet-show to be. He arrived on Thursday, supped and lay at St. James's. Yesterday evening he was at the queen's and Carlton-house, and at night at lady Hertford's assembly. He only takes the title of *altesse*, an absurd mezzotermine, but acts king exceedingly; struts in the circle like a cock-sparrow, and does the honours of himself very civilly. There is a favourite too, who seems a complete jackanapes; a young fellow called Holke, well enough in his figure, and about three-and-twenty, but who will be tumbled down long before he is prepared for it. Bernsdorff, a Hanoverian, his first minister, is a decent sensible man; I pity him, though I suppose he is envied. From lady Hertford's they went to Ranelagh, and to-night go to the opera. There had like to have been an untoward circumstance: the last new opera in the spring, which was exceedingly pretty, was called *I Viaggiatori Ridicoli*, and they were on the point of acting it for this royal traveller.

I am sure you are not sorry that Cornwallis is archbishop. He is no hypocrite, time-server, nor high-priest. I little expected so good a choice. Adieu.

Yours ever.

To the EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 16, 1768.

As you have been so good, my dear lord, as twice to take notice of my letter, I am bound in conscience and gratitude to try to amuse you with any thing new. A royal visitor, quite fresh, is a real curiosity—by the reception of him, I do not think many more of the breed will come hither. He came from Dover in hackney-chaises; for somehow or other the master of the horse happened to be in Lincolnshire; and the king's coaches having received no orders, were too good subjects to go and fetch a stranger king of their own heads. However, as his Danish majesty travels to improve himself for the good of his people, he will go back extremely enlightened in the arts of government and morality, by having learned that crowned heads may be reduced to ride in a hired chaise.

By another mistake, king George happened to go to Richmond about an hour before king Christiern arrived in London. An hour is exceedingly long; and the distance to Richmond still longer: so with all the dispatch that could possibly be made, king George could not get back to his capital till next day at noon. Then, as the road from his closet at St. James's to the king of Denmark's apartment on t'other side of the palace is about thirty miles, which posterity,

having no conception of the prodigious extent and magnificence of St. James's, will never believe, it was half an hour after three before his Danish majesty's courier could go, and return to let him know that his good brother and ally was leaving the palace in which they both were, in order to receive him at the queen's palace, which you know is about a million of snail's paces from St. James's. Notwithstanding these difficulties and unavoidable delays, Woden, Thor, Friga, and all the gods that watch over the kings of the North, did bring these two invincible monarchs to each other's embraces about half an hour after five that same evening. They passed an hour in projecting a family compact that will regulate the destiny of Europe to latest posterity: and then, the Fates so willing it, the British prince departed for Richmond, and the Danish potentate repaired to the widowed mansion of his royal mother-in-law, where he poured forth the fullness of his heart in praises on the lovely bride she had bestowed on him, from whom nothing but the benefit of his subjects could ever have torn him. —— And here let calumny blush, who has aspersed so chaste and faithful a monarch with low amours; pretending that he has raised to the honour of a seat in his sublime council, an artisan of Hamburgh, known only by repairing the soles of buskins, because that mechanic would, on no other terms, consent to his fair daughter's being honoured with majestic em-

braces. So victorious over his passions is this young Scipio from the Pole, that though on Shooter's-hill he fell into an ambush laid for him by an illustrious countess, of blood-royal herself, his majesty, after descending from his car, and courteously greeting her, again mounted his vehicle, without being one moment eclipsed from the eyes of the surrounding multitude.——Oh! mercy on me! I am out of breath — Pray let me descend from my stilts, or I shall send you as fustian and tedious a history as that of Henry II.—Well then, this great king is a very little one; not ugly, nor ill-made. He has the sublime strut of his grandfather, or of a cock-sparrow; and the divine white eyes of all his family by the mother's side. His curiosity seems to have consisted in the original plan of travelling, for I cannot say he takes notice of any thing in particular. His manner is cold and dignified, but very civil and gracious and proper. The mob adore him and huzza him; and so they did the first instant. At present they begin to know why—for he flings money to them out of his windows; and by the end of the week I do not doubt but they will want to choose him for Middlesex. His court is extremely well ordered; for they bow as low to him at every word as if his name was Sultan Amurat. You would take his first minister for only the first of his slaves. —I hope this example, which they have been so good as to exhibit at the opera, will contribute to

civilise us. There is indeed a pert young gentleman, who a little discomposes this august ceremonial. His name is count Holke, his age three-and-twenty; and his post answers to one that we had formerly in England, many ages ago, and which in our tongue was called the lord high favourite. Before the Danish monarchs became absolute, the most refractory of that country used to write libels, called *North Danes*, against this great officer; but that practice has long since ceased. Count Holke seems rather proud of his favour, than shy of displaying it.

End of Volume the first.

I hope, my dear lord, you will be content with my Danish politics, for I trouble myself with no other. There is a long history about the baron de Bottetourt, and sir Jeffery Amherst, who has resigned his regiment; but it is nothing to me, nor do I care a straw about it. I am deep in the anecdotes of the new court; and if you want to know more of count Holke or count Molke, or the grand vizier Bernsdorff, or mynheer Schimmelman, apply to me, and you shall be satisfied——But what do I talk of? You will see them yourself. Minerva in the shape of count Bernsdorff, or out of all shape in the person of the duchess of * * *, is to conduct Telemachus to York races; for can a monarch be perfectly accomplished in the

mysteries of king-craft, as our Solomon James I. called it, unless he is initiated in the arts of jockeyship? When this northern star travels towards its own sphere, lord Hertford will go to Ragley. I shall go with him; and if I can avoid running foul of the magi that will be thronging from all parts to worship that star, I will endeavour to call at Wentworth castle for a day or two, if it will not be inconvenient. I should think it would be about the second week in September, but your lordship shall hear again, unless you should forbid me, who am ever

Lady Strafford's and your lordship's
Most faithful humble servant.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 20, 1768.

You are always heaping so many kindnesses on me, dear sir, that I think I must break off all acquaintance with you, unless I can find some way of returning them. The print of the countess of Exeter is the greatest present to me in the world. I have been trying for years to no purpose to get one. Reynolds the painter promised to beg one for me of a person he knows, but I have never had it. I wanted it for four different purposes. 1. As a grandmother (in law, by the Cranes and Al-

lingtons): 2. for my collection of heads: 3. for the volumes of prints after pieces in my collection: and above all, for my collection of Faithornes, which, though so fine, wanted such a capital print: and to this last I have preferred it. I give you unbounded thanks for it: and yet I feel exceedingly ashamed to rob you. The print of Jane Shore I had: but as I have such various uses for prints I easily bestowed it. It is inserted in my anecdotes, where her picture is mentioned.

Thank you too for all your notices. I intend next summer to set about the last volume of my Anecdotes, and to make still further additions to my former volumes, in which these notes will find their place. I am going to reprint all my pieces together, and to my shame be it spoken, find, they will make at least two large quartos. You, I know, will be partial enough to give them a place on a shelf, but as I doubt many persons will not be so favourable, I only think of leaving the edition behind me.

Methinks I should like for your amusement and my own, that you settled at Ely: yet I value your health so much beyond either, that I must advise Milton, Ely being, I believe, a very damp, and consequently, a very unwholesome situation. Pray let me know on which you fix; and if you do fix this summer, remember the hopes you have given me of a visit. My summer, that is, my fixed residence here, lasts till November. My gallery is not only

finished, but I am going on with the round chamber at the end of it; and am besides *playing* with the little garden on the other side of the road, which was old Franklin's, and by his death came into my hands. When the round tower is finished, I propose to draw up a description and catalogue of the whole house and collection, and I think you will not dislike lending me your assistance.

Mr. Granger, of Shiplake, is printing his laborious and curious Catalogue of English Heads, with an accurate though succinct account of almost all the persons. It will be a very valuable and useful work, and I heartily wish may succeed; though I have some fears. There are of late a small number of persons who collect English heads; but not enough to encourage such a work: I hope the anecdotic part will make it more known and tasted. It is essential to us, who shall love the performance, that it should sell: for he prints no farther at first, than to the end of the first Charles: and if this part does not sell well, the bookseller will not purchase the remainder of the copy, though he gives but an 100*l.* for this half; and good Mr. Granger is not in circumstances to afford printing it himself. I do not compare it with Dr. Robertson's writings, who has an excellent genius, with admirable style and manner; and yet I cannot help thinking, that there is a good deal of Scotch puffing and par-

tiality, when the booksellers have given the doctor 3000*l.* for his Life of Charles V., for composing which he does not pretend to have obtained any new materials.

I am going into Warwickshire; and I think shall go on to lord Strafford's, but propose returning before the end of September.

Yours ever.

To the EARL of STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, Monday, Oct. 10, 1768.

I give you a thousand thanks, my dear lord, for the account of the ball at Welbeck. I shall not be able to repay it with a relation of the masquerade to-night; for I have been confined here this week with the gout in my foot, and have not stirred off my bed or couch since Tuesday. I was to have gone to the great ball at Sion [1] on Friday, for which a new road, paddock and bridge were made, as other folks make a dessert. I conclude lady Mary [2] has, and will tell you of all these pomps, which health thinks so serious, and sickness with her

---

1 The villa of the duke of Northumberland near Brentford.

2 Lady Mary Coke, sister to lady Strafford.

grave face tells one are so idle. Sickness may make me moralize, but I assure you she does not want humour. She has diverted me extremely with drawing a comparison between the repose (to call neglect by its dignified name) which I have enjoyed in this fit, and the great anxiety in which the whole world was when I had the last gout three years ago — You remember my friends were then coming into power. Lord W—— was so good as to call at least once every day, and inquire after me; and the foreign ministers insisted that I should give them the satisfaction of seeing me, that they might tranquillize their sovereigns with the certainty of my not being in any danger. The duke and duchess of Newcastle were so kind, though very nervous themselves, as to send messengers and long messages every day from Claremont. I cannot say this fit has alarmed Europe quite so much. I heard the bell ring at the gate, and asked with much majesty if it was the duke of Newcastle had sent? "No, sir, it was only the butcher's boy." The butcher's boy is indeed the only courier I have had. Neither the king of France nor king of Spain appears to be under the least concern about me.

My dear lord, I have had so many of these transitions in my life, that you will not wonder they divert me more than a masquerade. I am ready to say to most people, — "Mask, I know you."— I wish I might choose their dresses!

When I have the honour of seeing lady Strafford, I shall beseech her to tell me all the news; for I am too nigh and too far to know any. Adieu, my dear lord!

Your most sincerely.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Nov. 10, 1768.

I HAVE not received the cheese, but I thank you as much beforehand. I have been laid up with a fit of the gout in both feet and a knee; at Strawberry for an entire month, and eight days here: I took the air for the first time the day before yesterday, and am, considering, surprisingly recovered by the assistance of the bootikins and my own perseverance in drinking water. I moulted my stick to-day, and have no complaint but weakness left. The fit came just in time to augment my felicity in having quitted parliament. I do not find it so uncomfortable to grow old, when one is not obliged to expose one's self in public.

I neither rejoice nor am sorry at your being accommodated in your new habitation. It has long been plain to me that you choose to bury yourself in the ugliest spot you can find, at a distance from almost all your acquaintance; so I give it up; and then I am glad you are pleased.

Nothing is stirring but politics, and chiefly the worst kind of politics, elections. I trouble myself with no sort, but seek to pass what days the gout leaves me or bestows on me, as quietly as I can. I do not wonder at others, because I doubt I am more singular than they are; and what makes me happy, would probably not make them so. My best compliments to your brother; I shall be glad to see you both when you come; though for you, you don't care how little time you pass with your friends. Yet I am, and ever shall be,

Yours most sincerely.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1768.

You cannot wonder when I receive such kind letters from you, that I am vexed our intimacy should be reduced almost to those letters. It is selfish to complain, when you give me such good reasons for your system: but I grow old; and the less time we have to live together, the more I feel a separation from a person I love so well; and that reflection furnishes me with arguments in vindication of my peevishness. Methinks, though the contrary is true in practice, prudence should be the attribute of youth, not of years. When we approach to the last gate of life, what does it

signify to provide for new furnishing one's house? Youth should have all those cares; indeed, charming youth is better employed. It leaves foresight to those that have little occasion for it. You and I have both done with the world, the busy world, and therefore I would smile with you over what we have both seen of it, and luckily we can smile both, for we have quitted it willingly, not from disgust nor mortifications. However, I do not pretend to combat your reasons, much less would I draw you to town a moment sooner than it is convenient to you, though I shall never forget your offering it. Nay, it is not so much in town that I wish we were nearer, as in the country. Unless one lives exactly in the same set of company, one is not much the better for one's friends being in London. I that talk of giving up the world, have only given up the troubles of it, as far as that is possible. I should speak more properly in saying, that I have retired out of the world into London. I always intend to place some months between me and the moroseness of retirement. We are not made for solitude. It gives us prejudices, it indulges us in our own humours, and at last we cannot live without them.

My gout is quite gone; and if I had a mind to disguise its remains, I could walk very gracefully, except on going down stairs. Happily it is not the fashion to hand any body; the nymph and I should soon be at the bottom.

Your old cousin Newcastle is going; he has had a stroke of the palsy, and they think will not last two days. I hope he is not sensible, as I doubt he would be too averse to his situation. Poor man! he is not like my late amiable friend, lady Hervey; two days before she died, she wrote to her son Bristol these words: "I feel my dissolution coming on, but I have no pain; what can an old woman desire more?" This was consonant to her usual propriety—yes, propriety is grace, and thus every body may be graceful, when other graces are fled. Oh! but you will cry, is not this a contradiction to the former part of your letter? Prudence is one of the graces of age—why—yes, I do not know but it may be—and yet I don't know how, it is a musty quality; one hates to allow it to be a grace—come, at least it is only like that one of the graces that hides her face. In short, I have ever been so imprudent, that though I have much corrected myself, I am not at all vain of such merit. I have purchased it for much more than it was worth.

I wish you joy of lord Guildford's amendment; and always take a full part in your satisfaction or sorrow. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 1, 1768.

I LIKE your letter, and have been looking at my next door but one. The ground-story is built, and the side walls will certainly be raised another floor, before you think of arriving. I fear nothing for you but the noise of workmen, and of this street in front and Piccadilly on the other side. If you can bear such a constant hammering and hurricane, it will rejoice me to have you so near me; and then I think I must see you oftener than I have done these ten years. Nothing can be more dignified than this position. From my earliest memory Arlington-street has been the ministerial street. The duke of Grafton is actually coming into the house of Mr. Pelham, which my lord president is quitting, and which occupies too the ground, on which my father lived; and lord Weymouth has just taken the duke of Dorset's; yet you and I, I doubt, shall always live on the wrong side of the way.

Lord Chatham is reconciled to lord Temple and George Grenville. The second is in great spirits on the occasion; and yet gives out that lord Chatham earnestly solicited it. The insignificant Lepidus patronizes Antony, and is sued to by Augustus! Still do I doubt whether Augustus will ever come forth again. Is this a peace patched up by Livia

for the sake of her children, seeing the imbecility of her husband? or is Augustus to own he has been acting a changeling, like the first Brutus, for near two years? I do not know, I remain in doubt.

Wilkes has struck an artful stroke. The ministers, devoid of all management in the House of Commons, consented that he should be heard at the bar of the House, and appointed to-morrow, forgetting the election for Middlesex is to come on next Thursday: one would think they were impatient to advance riots. Last Monday Wilkes demanded to examine lord Temple: when that was granted, he asked for lord Sandwich and lord March. As the first had not been refused, the others could not. The Lords were adjourned till to-day, and, I suppose, are now sitting on this perplexing demand. If lord Temple desires to go to the bar of the Commons, and the others desire to be excused, it will be difficult for the Lords to know what to do. Sandwich is frightened out of his senses, and March does not like it. Well! this will cure ministers and great lords of being flippant in dirty tyranny, when they see they may be worried for it four years afterwards.

The Commons, I suppose, are at this minute as hotly engaged on the Cumberland election between sir James Lowther and the duke of Portland. Oh! how delightful and comfortable to be sitting quietly

here and scribbling to you, perfectly indifferent about both houses!

You will just escape having your brains beaten out, by not coming this fortnight. The Middlesex election will be over. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday, March 26, 1769.

I BEG your pardon, I promised to send you news, and I had quite forgot that we have had a rebellion; at least the duke of Bedford says so. Six or eight hundred merchants, English, Dutch, Jews, Gentiles, had been entreated to protect the Protestant succession, and consented. They set out on Wednesday noon in their coaches and chariots, chariots not armed with scythes like our Gothic ancestors. At Temple-bar they met several regiments of foot dreadfully armed with mud, who discharged a sleet of dirt on the royal troop. Minerva, who had forgotten her dreadful Ægis, and who, in the shape of Mr. Boehm, carried the address, was forced to take shelter under a cloud in Nando's coffee-house, being more afraid of Buckhorse than ever Venus was of Diomed; in short, it was a dismal day; and if lord Talbot had recol-

lected the patriot feats of his youth and re-commenced bruiser, I don't know but the duchess of Kingston, who has so long preserved her modesty, from *both* her husbands, might not have been ravished in the drawing-room. Peace is at present restored, and the rebellion adjourned to the thirteenth of April; when Wilkes and colonel Luttrell are to fight a pitched battle at Brentford, the Philippi of Antoninus. *Tityre tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi*, know nothing of these broils. You don't convert your plough-shares into falchions, nor the mud of Adderbury into gunpowder. I tremble for my painted windows, and write talismans of number forty-five on every gate and postern of my castle. Mr. Hume is writing the Revolutions of Middlesex, and a troop of barnacle geese are levied to defend the capital. These are melancholy times! Heaven send we do not laugh till we cry!

London, Tuesday, 28th.

Our ministers, like their Saxon ancestors, are gone to hold a wittenagemot on horseback at Newmarket. Lord Chatham, we are told, is to come forth after the holidays and place himself at the head of the discontented. When I see it I shall believe it. Lord Frederick Campbell is at last to be married this evening to the dowager countess of Ferrers. The duchess of Grafton is actually

countess of Ossory. This is a short gazette; but consider, it is a time of truce. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, April 15, 1769.

I SHOULD be very sorry to believe half your distempers. I am heartily grieved for the vacancy that has happened in your mouth, though you describe it so comically. As the only physic I believe in is prevention, you shall let me prescribe to you. Use a little bit of alum twice or thrice in a week, no bigger than half your nail, till it has all dissolved in your mouth, and then spit out. This has fortified my teeth, that they are as strong as the pen of Junius. I learned it of Mrs. Grosvenor, who had not a speck in her teeth to her death. For your other complaints, I revert to my old sermon, temperance. If you will live in a hermitage, methinks it is no great addition to live like a hermit. Look in Sadeler's prints, they had beards down to their girdles; and with all their impatience to be in heaven, their roots and water kept them for a century from their wishes. I have lived all my life like an anchoret in London and within ten miles, shed my skin after the gout, and am as

lively as an eel in a week after. Mr. Chute, who has drunk no more wine than a fish, grows better every year. He has escaped this winter with only a little pain in one hand. Consider that the physicians recommend wine, and then can you doubt of its being poison? Medicines may cure a few acute distempers, but how should they mend a broken constitution? they would as soon mend a broken leg. Abstinence and time may repair it, nothing else can; for when time has been employed to spoil the blood, it cannot be purified in a moment.

Wilkes, who has been chosen member of parliament almost as often as Marius was consul, was again re-elected on Thursday. The house of Commons, who are as obstinate as the county, have again rejected him. To-day they are to instate colonel Luttrel in his place. What is to follow I cannot say, but I doubt grievous commotions. Both sides seem so warm, that it will be difficult for either to be in the right. This is not a merry subject, and therefore I will have done with it. If it comes to blows, I intend to be as neutral as the gentleman that was going out with his hounds the morning of Edgehill. I have seen too much of parties to list with any of them.

You promised to return to town, but now say nothing of it. You had better come before a passport is necessary. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 11, 1769.

You are so wayward, that I often resolve to give you up to your humours. Then something happens with which I can divert you, and my good humour returns. Did not you say you should return to London long before this time? At least, could you not tell me you had changed your mind? why am I to pick it out from your absence and silence, as Dr. Warburton found a future state in Moses's saying nothing of the matter! I could go on with a chapter of severe interrogatories, but I think it more cruel to treat you as a hopeless reprobate; yes, you are graceless, and as I have a respect for my own scolding, I shall not throw it away upon you.

Strawberry has been in great glory; I have given a festino there that will almost mortgage it. Last Tuesday all France dined there; Monsieur and Madame du Chatelet, the duc de Liancour, three more French ladies, whose names you will find in the enclosed paper, eight other Frenchmen, the Spanish and Portuguese ministers, the Holdernesses, Fitzroys, in short we were four-and-twenty. They arrived at two. At the gates of the castle I received them dressed in the cravat of Gibbins's carving, and a pair of gloves embroidered up to the elbows that had belonged to James the first.

The French servants stared, and firmly believed this was the dress of English country gentlemen. After taking a survey of the apartments we went to the printing-house, where I had prepared the enclosed verses, with translations by Monsieur de Lille, one of the company. The moment they were printed off, I gave a private signal, and French horns and clarionets accompanied this compliment. We then went to see Pope's grotto and garden, and returned to a magnificent dinner in the refectory. In the evening we walked; had tea, coffee, and lemonade in the gallery, which was illuminated with a thousand, or thirty candles, I forget which, and played at whist and loo till midnight. Then there was a cold supper, and at one the company returned to town saluted by fifty nightingales, who as tenants of the manor came to do honour to their lord.

I cannot say last night was equally agreeable. There was what they called a *ridotto al fresco* at Vauxhall, for which one paid half-a-guinea, though except some thousand more lamps and a covered passage all round the garden, which took off from the gardenhood, there was nothing better than on a common night. Mr. Conway and I set out from his house at eight o'clock; the tide and torrent of coaches was so prodigious, that it was half an hour after nine before we got half way from Westminster-bridge. We then alighted, and after scrambling under bellies of horses, through wheels, and

over posts and rails, we reached the gardens, where were already many thousand persons. Nothing diverted me but a man in a Turk's dress and two nymphs in masquerade without masks, who sailed amongst the company, and which was surprising seemed to surprise nobody. It had been given out that people were desired to come in fancied dresses without masks. We walked twice round and were rejoiced to come away, though with the same difficulties as at our entrance, for we found three strings of coaches all along the road, who did not move half a foot in half an hour. There is to be a rival mob in the same way at Ranelagh to-morrow, for the greater the folly and imposition the greater is the crowd. I have suspended the vestimenta that were torn off my back to the god of repentance, and shall stay away. Adieu; I have not a word more to say to you.

Yours, &c.

P. S. I hope you will not regret paying a shilling for this packet.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 27, 1769.

Dear Sir,

I have not heard from you this century, nor knew where you had fixed yourself. Mr. Gray tells me

you are still at Waterbeche. Mr. Granger has published his Catalogue of Prints, and Lives down to the Revolution; and, as the work sells well, I believe, nay, do not doubt, we shall have the rest. There are a few copies printed but on one side of the leaf. As I know you love scribbling in such books as well as I do, I beg you will give me leave to make you a present of one set. I shall send it in about a week to Mr. Gray, and have desired him, as soon as he has turned it over, to convey it to you. I have found a few mistakes, and you will find more. To my mortification, though I have four thousand heads, I find, upon a rough calculation, that I still want three or four hundred.

Pray give me some account of yourself, how you do, and whether you are fixed? I thought you rather inclined to Ely. Are we never to have the history of that cathedral? I wish you would tell me that you have any thoughts of coming this way, or that you would make me a visit this summer. I shall be little from home this summer till August, when I think of going to Paris for six weeks. To be sure you have seen the History of British Topography, which was published this winter, and it is a delightful book in our way.

Adieu! dear sir,

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, June 14, 1769.

Dear Sir,

Among many agreeable passages in your last, there is nothing I like so well, as the hope you give me of seeing you here in July. I will return that visit immediately: don't be afraid; I do not mean to incommode you at Waterbeche; but, if you will come, I promise I will accompany you back as far as Cambridge; nay, carry you on to Ely, for thither I am bound. The bishop has sent a Dr. Nichols to me, to desire I would assist him in a plan for the east window of his cathedral, which he intends to *benefactorate* with painted glass. The window is the most untractable of all Saxon uncouthnesses: nor can I conceive what to do with it, but by taking off the bottoms for arms and mosaic, splitting the crucifixion into three compartments, and filling the five lights at top with prophets, saints, martyrs, and such like; after shortening the windows like the great ones. This I shall propose. However, I choose to see the spot myself, as it will be a proper attention to the BP. after his civility, and I really would give the best advice I could. The BP. like Alexander VIII. feels that *the clock has struck half an hour past eleven*, and is impatient to be *let depart in peace* after his eyes shall have seen his vitrification: at

least he is impatient to give his eyes that treat; and yet it will be pity to precipitate the work. If you can come to me first, I shall be happy; if not, I must come to you: that is, will meet you at Cambridge. Let me know your mind, for I would not press you unseasonably. I am enough obliged to you already; though, by mistake, you think it is you that are obliged to me. I do not mean to plunder you of any more prints; but shall employ a *little collector* to get me all that are getable. The rest, the *greatest* of us all must want.

I am very sorry for the fever you have had: but, Goodman Frog, if you will live in the fens, do not expect to be as healthy as if you were a fat Dominican at Naples. You, and your MSS. will all grow mouldy. When our climate is subject to no sign but Aquarius and Pisces, would one choose the dampest country under the heavens? I do not expect to persuade you, and so I will say no more. I wish you joy of the treasure you have discovered: six Saxon bishops and a duke of Northumberland![1]

---

[1] The following is an extract from a previous letter of Mr. Cole's, and to this Mr. Walpole alludes. "An old wall being to be taken down behind the choir [at Ely] on which were painted seven figures of six Saxon bishops and a duke, as he is called, of Northumberland, one Brithnoth: which painting I take to be as old as any we have in England—I guessed by seven arches in the wall, below the figures, that the bones of these seven benefactors to the old Saxon conventual church

You have had fine sport this season. Thank you much for wishing to see my name on a plate in the History. But, seriously, I have no such vanity. I did my utmost to dissuade Mr. Granger from the dedication, and took especial pains to get my *virtues* left out of the question; till I found he would be quite hurt if I did not let him express his gratitude, as he called it: so, to satisfy him, I was forced to accept of his present; for I doubt I have few virtues but what he has presented me with: and in a dedication, you know, one is permitted to have as many as the author can afford to bestow. I really have another objection to the plate; which is, the ten guineas. I have so many draughts on my extravagance for trifles that I like better than vanity, that I should not care to be at that expense. But I should think either the duke or duchess of Northumberland would rejoice at such opportunity of buying incense; and I will tell you what you shall do. Write to Mr. Percy, and vaunt the discovery of duke Brithnoth's bones, and ask him to move their graces to contribute a plate. They

---

were reposited in the wall under them: accordingly we found seven separate holes, each with the remains of the said persons," &c. &c. Mr. Cole proposed that Mr. Walpole should contribute an engraving from this painting to the History of Ely Cathedral, a work about to be published, or use his interest to induce the duke of Northumberland to do so.

could not be so *unnatural* as to refuse; especially if the duchess knew the size of his thighbone.

I was very happy to show civilities to your friends, and should have asked them to stay and dine, but unluckily expected other company. Dr. Ewin seems a very good sort of man, and Mr. Rawlinson a very agreeable one. Pray do not think it was any trouble to me to pay respect to your recommendation.

I have been eagerly reading Mr. Shenstone's letters, which, though containing nothing but trifles, amused me extremely, as they mention so many persons I know; particularly myself. I found there, what I did not know, and what, I believe, Mr. Gray himself never knew, that his ode on my cat was written to ridicule lord Lyttelton's monody. It is just as true as that the latter will survive, and the former be forgotten. There is another anecdote equally vulgar, and void of truth: that my father, sitting in George's coffee-house (I suppose Mr. Shenstone thought, that, after he quitted his place, he went to coffee-houses to learn news,) was asked to contribute to a figure of himself that was to be beheaded by the mob. I do remember something like it, but it happened to myself. I met a mob, just after my father was out, in Hanover-square, and drove up to it to know what was the matter. They were carrying about a figure of my sister. This probably gave rise to the other story. That on

my uncle I never heard; but it is a good story, and not at all improbable. I felt great pity on reading these letters for the narrow circumstances of the author, and the passion for fame that he was tormented with; and yet he had much more fame than his talents intitled him to. Poor man! he wanted to have all the world talk of him for the pretty place he had made; and which he seems to have made only that it might be talked of. The first time a company came to see my house, I felt his joy. I am now so tired of it, that I shudder when the bell rings at the gate. It is as bad as keeping an inn, and I am often tempted to deny its being shown, if it would not be ill-natured to those that come, and to my house-keeper. I own, I was one day too cross. I had been plagued all the week with staring crowds. At last it rained a deluge. Well, said I, at last, nobody will come to-day. The words were scarce uttered, when the bell rang. A company desired to see the house. I replied, 'Tell them they cannot possibly see the house, but they are very welcome to walk in the garden.'

Observe: nothing above alludes to Dr. Ewin and Mr. Rawlinson: I was not only much pleased with them, but quite glad to show them how entirely you may command my house, and your most sincere friend and servant.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Monday, June 26, 1769.

DEAR SIR,

OH! yes, yes; I shall like Thursday or Friday, 6th or 7th exceedingly; I shall like your staying with me two days exceedinglier; and longer exceedingliest: and I will carry you back to Cambridge on our pilgrimage to Ely. But I should not at all like to be catched in the glories of an installation, and find myself a doctor, before I knew where I was. It will be much more agreeable to find the whole *caput* asleep, digesting turtle, dreaming of bishoprics, and humming old catches of Anacreon, and scraps of Coselli. I wish Mr. Gray may not be set out for the north; which is rather the case than setting out for the summer. We have no summers, I think, but what we raise, like pine-apples, by fire. My hay is an absolute *water-soochy*, and teaches me how to feel for you. You are quite in the right to sell your fief in Marshland. I should be glad if you would take one step more, and quit Marshland. We live, at least, on terra firma in this part of the world, and can saunter out without stilts. *Item*, we do not wade into pools, and call it going upon the water, and get sore throats. I trust yours is better; but I recollect this is

not the first you have complained of. Pray be not incorrigible, but come to shore.

Be so good as to thank Mr. Smith, my old tutor, for his corrections. If ever the Anecdotes are reprinted, I will certainly profit of them.

I joked, it is true, about Joscelin de Louvain, and his duchess; but not at all in advising you to make Mr. Percy pimp for the plate. On the contrary, I wish you success, and think this an infallible method of obtaining the benefaction. It is right to lay vanity under contribution: for then both sides are pleased.

It will not be easy for you to to dine with Mr. Granger from hence, and return at night. It cannot be less than six or seven-and-twenty miles to Shiplake. But I go to Park-place to-morrow, [Mr. Henry Conway's] which is within two miles of him, and I will try if I can tempt him to meet you here. Adieu!

Dear sir,

Yours most sincerely

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Arlington-street, July 3, 1769.

WHEN you have been so constantly good to me, my dear lord, without changing, do you wonder

that our friendship has lasted so long? Can I be insensible to the honour or pleasure of your acquaintance? When the advantage lies so much on my side, am I likely to alter the first? Oh, but it will last now! We have seen friendships without number born and die. Ours was not formed on interest, nor alliance; and politics, the poison of all English connections, never entered into ours. You have given me a new proof by remembering the chapel of Luton. I hear it is to be preserved; and am glad of it, though I might have been the better for its ruins.

I should have answered your lordship's last post, but was at Park-place. I think lady Ailesbury quite recovered; though her illness has made such an impression that she does not yet believe it.

It is so settled that we are never to have tolerable weather in June, that the first hot day was on Saturday — hot by comparison; for I think it is three years since we have really felt the feel of summer. I was, however, concerned to be forced to come to town yesterday on some business; for, however the country feels, it looks divine, and the verdure we buy so dear is delicious. I shall not be able, I fear, to profit of it this summer in the loveliest of all places, as I am to go to Paris in August. But next year I trust I shall accompany Mr. Conway and lady

Ailesbury to Wentworth-castle. I shall be glad to visit Castle Howard and Beverley; but neither would carry me so far, if Wentworth-castle was not in the way.

The Chatelets are gone, without any more battles with the Russians.[1] The papers say the latter have been beaten by the Turks; which rejoices me, though against all rules of politics: but I detest that murderess, and like to have her humbled. I don't know that this piece of news is true: it is enough to me that it is agreeable. I had rather take it for granted, than be at the trouble of inquiring about what I have so little to do with. I am just the same about the City and Surrey petitions. Since I have *dismembered*[2] myself, it is incredible how cool I am to all politics.

London is the abomination of desolation; and I rejoice to leave it again this evening. Even Pam has not a levée above once or twice a week. Next winter I suppose it will begin to be a fashion to remove into the city; for, since it is the mode to choose aldermen at this end of the town, the macaronis will certainly adjourn to

---

[1] The duc de Chatelet, the French ambassador, had affronted comte Czernicheff, the Russian ambassador, at a ball at court for precedence; and a challenge ensued: but their meeting was prevented.

[2] Mr. Walpole means, since he quitted parliament.

Bishopsgate-street, for fear of being fined for sheriffs. Mr. J * * * * and Mr. B * * * * will die of the thought of being aldermen of Grosvenor-ward and Berkeley-square-ward. Adam and Eve in their paradise laugh at all these tumults, and have not tasted of the tree that forfeits paradise; which I take to have been the tree of politics, not of knowledge. How happy you are not to have your son Abel knocked on the head by his brother Cain at the Brentford election! You do not hunt the poor deer and hares that gambol around you. — If Eve has a sin, I doubt it is angling; but as she makes all other creatures happy, I beg she would not impale worms nor whisk carp out of one element into another. If she repents of that guilt, I hope she will live as long as her grandson Methuselah. There is a commentator that says *his* life was protracted for never having boiled a lobster alive. Adieu, dear couple, that I honour as much as I could honour my first grandfather and grandmother!

Your most dutiful

HOR. JAPHET.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Friday, July 7, 1769.

You desired me to write, if I knew any thing particular. How particular will content you? Don't imagine I would send you such hash as the livery's petition.[1] Come; would the apparition of my lord Chatham satisfy you? Don't be frightened: it was not his ghost. He, he himself in propriâ personâ, and not in a strait waistcoat, walked into the king's levee this morning, and was in the closet twenty minutes after the levee; and was to go out of town to-night again. The deuce is in it if this is not news. Whether he is to be king, minister, lord mayor, or alderman, I do not know; nor a word more than I have told you. Whether he was sent for to guard St. James's gate, or whether he came alone, like Almanzor, to storm it, I cannot tell: by Beckford's violence I should think the latter. I am so indifferent what he came for, that I shall wait till Sunday to learn; when I lie in town on my way to Ely. You will probably hear more from your brother before I can write again. I send

[1] The petition of the livery of London, complaining of the unconstitutional conduct of the king's ministers, and the undue return of Mr. Luttrell when he opposed Mr. Wilkes at the election for Middlesex.

this by my friend Mr. Granger,[2] who will leave it at your park-gate as he goes through Henley home. Good-night: it is past twelve, and I am going to bed.

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, July 15, 1769.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR fellow travellers, Rosette[3] and I, got home safe and perfectly contented with our expedition, and wonderfully obliged to you. Pray receive our thanks and *barking;* and pray *say*, and *bark* a great deal for us to Mr. and Mrs. Bentham, and all that good family.

After gratitude, you know, always comes a little self-interest; for who would be at the trouble of being grateful, if he had no farther expectations? *Imprimis*, then, here are the directions for Mr. Essex for the piers of my gates. Bp. Luda must not be offended at my converting his tomb into a gateway. Many a saint and confessor, I doubt, will be glad soon to be *passed through*, as it will, at least, secure his being *passed over*.

---

2 Author of the Biographical History of England.

3 A favourite dog of Mr. Walpole's.

When I was directing the east window at Ely, I recollected the lines of Prior:

"How unlucky were nature and art to poor Nell!
She was painting her cheeks at the time her nose fell."

Adorning cathedrals when the religion itself totters, is very like poor Nell's mishap.[4]

* * * * * * *

I will trouble you with no more at present, but to get from Mr. Lort the name of the Norfolk monster, and to give it to Jackson. Don't forget the list of English heads in Dr. Ewin's book for Mr. Granger; particularly the duchess of Chenreux. I will now release you, only adding my compliments to Dr. Ewin, Mr. Tyson, Mr. Lort, Mr. Essex, and once more to the Benthams.

Adieu, dear sir,

Yours ever.

Remember to ask me for acacias, and any thing else with which I can pay some of my debts to you.

---

[4] Here follow some minute directions for building the gateway, unintelligible without the sketch that accompanied the letter, and uninteresting with it, and a list of prints that Mr. Walpole was anxious to procure.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 12, 1769.

Dear Sir,

I was in town yesterday, and found the parcel arrived very safe. I give you a thousand thanks, dear sir, for all the contents; but when I sent you the list of heads I wanted, it was for Mr. Jackson, not at all meaning to rob you; but your generosity much outruns my prudence, and I must be upon my guard with you. The Catherine Bolen was particularly welcome; I had never seen it—it is a treasure, though I am persuaded not genuine, but taken from a French print of the queen of Scots, which I have. I wish you could tell me from whence it was taken; I mean from what book: I imagine the same in which are two prints, which Mr. Granger mentions, and has himself (with Italian inscriptions, too) of a duke of Northumberland and an earl of Arundel. Mr. Bernardiston I never saw before — I do not know in what reign he lived — I suppose lately: nor do I know the era of the master of Benet. When I come back I must beg you to satisfy these questions. The countess of Kent is very curious too; I have lately got a very dirty one, so that I shall return yours again. Mrs. Wooley I could not get high nor low. But there is no end of thanking you—

and yet I must for sir J. Finett, though Mr. Hawkins gave me a copy a fortnight ago. I must delay sending them till I come back. Be so good as to thank Mr. Tyson for his prints and notes; the latter I have not had time to look over, I am so hurried with my journey; but I am sure they will be very useful to me. I hope he will not forget me in October. It will be a good opportunity of sending you some young acacias, or any thing you want from hence. I am sure you ought to ask me for any thing in my power, so much I am in your debt: I must beg to be a little more, by entreating you to pay Mr. Essex whatever he asks for his drawing, which is just what I wished. The iron gates I have.

With regard to a history of Gothic architecture, in which he desires my advice, the plan, I think, should lie in a very simple compass. Was I to execute it, it should be thus:—I would give a series of plates, even from the conclusion of Saxon architecture, beginning with the round Roman arch, and going on to show how they plaistered and zig-zagged it, and then how better ornaments crept in, till the beautiful Gothic arrived at its perfection: then how it deceased in Henry the 8th's reign!—Abp. Wareham's tomb at Canterbury, being, I believe, the last example of unbastardized Gothic. A very few plates more would demonstrate its change: though Holbein embroidered it with some morsels of true architec-

ture. In queen Elizabeth's reign there was scarce any architecture at all: I mean no pillars, or seldom, buildings then becoming quite plain. Under James a barbarous composition succeeded. A single plate of something of Inigo Jones, in his heaviest and worst style, should terminate the work; for he soon stepped into the true and perfect Grecian.

The next part Mr. Essex can do better than any body, and is, perhaps, the only person that can do it. This should consist on observations on the art, proportions, and method of building. and the reasons observed by the Gothic architects for what they did. This would show what great men they were, and how they raised such aerial and stupendous masses, though unassisted by half the lights now enjoyed by their successors. The prices and the wages of workmen, and the comparative value of money and provisions at the several periods, should be stated, as far as it is possible to get materials.

The last part (I don't know whether it should not be the first part) nobody can do so well as yourself. This must be to ascertain the chronologic period of each building. And not only of each building, but of each tomb, that shall be exhibited; for you know the great delicacy and richness of Gothic ornaments were exhausted on small chapels, oratories, and tombs. For my own

part, I should wish to have added detached samples of the various patterns of ornaments, which would not be a great many; as, excepting pinnacles, there is scarce one which does not branch from the trefoil; quatrefoils, cinquefoils, &c. being but various modifications of it. I believe almost all the ramifications of windows are so, and of them there should be samples too.

This work you see could not be executed by one hand: Mr. Tyson could give great assistance. I wish the plan was drawn out, and better digested. This is a very rude sketch, and first thought. I should be very glad to contribute what little I know, and to the expense too, which would be considerable; but I am sure *we* could get assistance — and it had better not be undertaken than executed superficially. Mr. Tyson's History of Fashions and Dresses would make a valuable part of the work; as, in elder times especially, much must be depended on tombs for dresses. I have a notion the king might be inclined to encourage such a work; and, if a proper plan was drawn out, for which I have not time now, I would endeavour to get it laid before him, and his patronage solicited. Pray talk this over with Mr. Tyson and Mr. Essex. It is an idea worth pursuing.

You was very kind to take me out of the scrape about the organ; and yet if my insignificant

name could carry it to one side, I would not scruple to lend it.[1] Thank you too for St. Alban and Noailles. The very picture the latter describes was in my father's collection, and is now at Worksop. I have scarce room to crowd in my compliments to the good house of Bentham, and to say

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

August 18, 1769.

As I have heard nothing of you since the Assyrian calends, which is much longer ago than the Greek, you may perhaps have died in Media, at Ecbatana, or in Chaldæa, and then to be sure I have no reason to take it ill, that you have forgotten me. There is no post between Europe and the Elysian fields, where I hope in the lord Pluto you are; and for the letters that are sent by Orpheus, Æneas, sir George Villiers, and such accidental passengers, to be sure one cannot wonder if they miscarry. You might indeed have sent one a scrawl by Fanny, as Cock-lane is not very distant from Arlington-street, but when I asked her, she

---

[1] There was a dispute among the chapter at Ely respecting the situation of the organ.

scratched the ghost of a *no*, that made one's ears tingle again. If, contrary to all probability, you should still be above ground, and if, which is still more improbable, you should repent of your sins while you are yet in good health, and should go strangely farther, and endeavour to make atonement by writing to me again, I think it conscientiously right to inform you, that I am not in Arlington-street, nor at Strawberry-hill, nor even in Middlesex; nay not in England, I am — I am — guess where — not in Corsica, nor at Spa — stay, I am not at Paris yet, but I hope to be there in two days. In short I am at Calais, having landed about two hours ago, after a tedious passage of nine hours. Having no soul with me but Rosette, I have been amusing myself with the arrival of a French officer and his wife in a berlin, which carried their ancestors to one of Moliere's plays; as madame has no maid with her, she and monsieur very prudently untied the trunks, and disburthened the venerable machine of all its luggage themselves; and then with a proper resumption of their quality, monsieur gave his hand to madame, and conducted her in much ceremony through the yard to their apartment. Here ends the beginning of my letter; when I have nothing else to do, perhaps I may continue it. You cannot have the confidence to complain, if I give you no more than my *momens perdus*; have you deserved any better of me?

Saturday morning.

HAVING just recollected that the whole merit of this letter will consist in the surprise, I hurry to finish it, and send it away by the captain of the packet, who is returning. You may repay me this surprise by answering my letter, and by directing yours to Arlington-street, from whence Mary will forward it to me. You will not have much time to consider, for I shall set out on my return from Paris the first of October, according to my solemn promise to Strawberry; and you must know, I keep my promises to Strawberry much better than you do. Adieu; Boulogne hoy.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Paris, August 30, 1769.

I HAVE been so hurried with paying and receiving visits, that I have not had a moment's worth of time to write. My passage was very tedious, and lasted near nine hours for want of wind —— But I need not talk of my journey; for Mr. Maurice, whom I met on the road, will have told you that I was safe on terra firma.

Judge of my surprise at hearing four days ago that my lord Dacre and my lady were arrived

here. They are lodged within a few doors of me. He is come to consult a doctor Pomme, who has proscribed wine, and lord Dacre already complains of the violence of his appetite. If you and I had *pommed* him to eternity, he would not have believed us. A man across the sea tells him the plainest thing in the world; that man happens to be called a doctor; and happening for novelty to talk common sense, is believed, as if he had talked nonsense! and what is more extraordinary, lord Dacre thinks himself better, *though* he is so.

My dear old woman[1] is in better health than when I left her, and her spirits so increased, that I tell her she will go mad with age. When they ask her how old she is, she answers, *J'ai soixante et mille ans.* She and I went to the Boulevard last night after supper, and drove about there till two in the morning. We are going to sup in the country this evening, and are to go to-morrow night at eleven to the puppet-show. A *protegé* of hers has written a piece for that theatre. I have not yet seen madame du Barri, nor can get to see her picture at the exposition at the Louvre, the crowds are so enormous that go thither for that purpose. As royal curiosities are the least part of my *virtù*, I wait with patience. Whenever I have an opportunity I visit gardens, chiefly with a view

[1] Madame du Deffand.

to Rosette's having a walk. She goes no where else, because there is a distemper among the dogs.

There is going to be represented a translation of Hamlet; who, when his hair is cut, and he is curled and powdered, I suppose will be exactly *monsieur le prince Oreste.* T'other night I was at Merope. The Dumenil was as divine as Mrs. Porter; they said her familiar tones were those of a *poissonniere.* In the last act, when one expected the catastrophe, Narbas, more interested than any body to see the event, remained coolly on the stage to hear the story. The queen's maid of honour entered without her handkerchief, and with her hair most artfully undressed, and reeling as if she was maudlin, sobbed out a long narrative, that did not prove true; while Narbas, with all the good breeding in the world, was more attentive to her fright than to what had happened. So much for propriety. Now for probability. Voltaire has published a tragedy, called *Les Guebres.* Two Roman colonels open the piece: they are brothers, and relate to one another, how they lately in company destroyed, by the emperor's mandate, a city of the Guebres, in which were their own wives and children, and they recollect that they want prodigiously to know whether both their families did not perish in the flames. The son of the one and the daughter of the other are taken up for heretics, and, thinking themselves brother and

sister, insist upon being married, and upon being executed for their religion. The son stabs his father, who is half a Guebre too. The high priest rants and roars. The emperor arrives, blames the pontiff for being a persecutor, and forgives the son for assassinating his father (who does not die) because — I don't know why, but that he may marry his cousin. — The grave-diggers in Hamlet have no chance, when such a piece as the Guebres is written agreeably to all rules and unities. Adieu, my dear sir! I hope to find you quite well at my return.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Sept. 7, 1769.

Your two letters flew here together in a breath. I shall answer the article of business first. I could certainly buy many things for you here, that you would like, the reliques of the last age's magnificence; but since my lady Holderness invaded the custom-house with an hundred and fourteen gowns, in the reign of that two-penny monarch George Grenville, the ports are so guarded, that not a soul but a smuggler can smuggle any thing into England; and I suppose you would not care to pay seventy-five per cent. on second-hand com-

modities. All I transported three years ago, was conveyed under the canon of the duke of Richmond. I have no interest in our present representative; nor if I had, is he returning. Plate, of all earthly vanities, is the most impassable: it is not counterband in its metallic capacity, but totally so in its personal; and the officers of the custom-house not being philosophers enough to separate the substance from the superficies, brutally hammer both to pieces, and return you only the intrinsic; a compensation which you, who are a member of parliament, would not, I trow, be satisfied with. Thus I doubt you must retrench your generosity to yourself, unless you can contract it into an Elzevir size, and be content with any thing one can bring in one's pocket.

My dear old friend was charmed with your mention of her, and made me vow to return you a thousand compliments. She cannot conceive why you will not step hither. Feeling in herself no difference between the spirits of twenty-three and seventy-three, she thinks there is no impediment to doing whatever one will, but the want of eyesight. If she had that, I am persuaded no consideration would prevent her making me a visit at Strawberry-hill. She makes songs, sings them, remembers all that ever were made; and having lived from the most agreeable to the most reasoning age, has all that was amiable in the last, all that is sensible in this, without the vanity of the

former, or the pedant impertinence of the latter. I have heard her dispute with all sorts of people, on all sorts of subjects, and never knew her in the wrong. She humbles the learned, sets right their disciples, and finds conversation for every body. Affectionate as Madame de Sevignè, she has none of her prejudices, but a more universal taste; and, with the most delicate frame, her spirits hurry her through a life of fatigue that would kill me, if I was to continue here. If we return by one in the morning from suppers in the country, she proposes driving to the *Boulevard* or to the *Foire St. Ovide*, because it is too early to go to bed. I had great difficulty last night to persuade her, though she was not well, not to sit up till between two or three for the comet; for which purpose she had appointed an astronomer to bring his telescopes to the president Henault's, as she thought it would amuse me. In short, her goodness to me is so excessive, that I feel unashamed at producing my withered person in a round of diversions, which I have quitted at home. I tell a story; I do feel ashamed, and sigh to be in my quiet castle and cottage; but it costs me many a pang, when I reflect that I shall probably never have resolution enough to take another journey to see this best and sincerest of friends, who loves me as much as my mother did! but it is idle to look forward ——— what is next year ———, a bubble that may burst for her or me before even

the flying year can hurry to the end of its almanack! To form plans and projects in such a precarious life as this, resembles the enchanted castles of fairy legends, in which every gate was guarded by giants, dragons, &c. Death or diseases bar every portal through which we mean to pass; and, though we may escape them and reach the last chamber, what a wild adventurer is he that centres his hopes at the end of such an avenue! I sit contented with the beggars of the threshold, and never propose going on, but as the gates open of themselves.

The weather here is quite sultry, and I am sorry to say one can send to the corner of the street and buy better peaches than all our expense in kitchen gardens produces. Lord and lady Dacre are a few doors from me, having started from Tunbridge more suddenly than I did from Strawberry-hill, but on a more unpleasant motive. My lord was persuaded to come and try a new physician. His faith is greater than mine; but, poor man! can one wonder that he is willing to believe? My lady has stood her shock, and I do not doubt will get over it.

Adieu, my t'other dear old friend! I am sorry to say I see you almost as seldom as I do Madame du Deffand. However, it is comfortable to reflect that we have not changed to each other for some five-and-thirty years, and neither you nor I haggle about naming so ancient a term. I made a visit

yesterday to the abbess of Panthemont, general Oglethorpe's niece, and no chicken. I inquired after her mother, Madame de Mezieres, and I thought I might to a spiritual votary to immortality venture to say, that her mother must be very old; she interrupted me tartly, and said, no, her mother had been married extremely young. Do but think of its seeming important to a saint to sink a wrinkle of her own through an iron grate! Oh! we are ridiculous animals; and if angels have any fun in them, how we must divert them!

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Paris, Sept. 8, 1769.

T'OTHER night at the duchess of Choiseul's at supper the intendant of Rouen asked me, if we have roads of communication all over England and Scotland? — I suppose he thinks that in general we inhabit trackless forests and wild mountains, and that once a year a few legislators come to Paris to learn the arts of civil life, as to sow corn, plant vines, and make operas. If this letter should contrive to scramble through that *desert* Yorkshire, where your lordship has *attempted* to improve a dreary hill and uncultivated vale, you will find I remember your commands of writing

from this capital of the world, whither I am come for the benefit of my country, and where I am intensely studying those laws and that beautiful frame of government, which can alone render a nation happy, great, and flourishing; where *lettres de cachet* soften manners, and a proper distribution of luxury and beggary ensures a common felicity. As we have a prodigious number of students in legislature of both sexes here at present, I will not anticipate their discoveries; but, as your particular friend, will communicate a rare improvement on nature, which these great philosophers have made, and which would add considerable beauties to those parts which your lordship has already recovered from the waste, and taught to look a little like a Christian country. The secret is very simple, and yet demanded the effort of a mighty genius to strike it out. It is nothing but this: Trees ought to be educated as much as men, and are strange awkward productions when not taught to hold themselves upright or bow on proper occasions. The academy *de belles lettres* have even offered a prize for the man that shall recover the long lost art of an ancient Greek, called *le sieur Orphée*, who instituted a dancing-school for plants, and gave a magnificent ball on the birth of the dauphin of Thrace, which was performed entirely by forest trees. In this whole kingdom there is no such thing as seeing a tree that is not well behaved. They are first stripped

up and then cut down; and you would as soon meet a man with his hair about his ears as an oak or ash. As the weather is very hot now, and the soil chalk, and the dust white, I assure you it is very difficult, powdered as both are all over, to distinguish a tree from a hair-dresser. Lest this should sound like a travelling hyperbole, I must advertise your lordship, that there is little difference in their heights; for a tree of thirty years growth being liable to be marked as royal timber, the proprietors take care not to let their trees live to the age of being enlisted, but burn them, and plant others as often almost as they change their fashions. This gives an air of perpetual youth to the face of the country, and if adopted by us would realize Mr. Addison's visions, and

Make our bleak rocks and barren mountains smile.

What other remarks I have made in my indefatigable search after knowledge must be reserved to a future opportunity; but as your lordship is my friend, I may venture to say without vanity to you, that Solon nor any of the ancient philosophers who travelled to Egypt in quest of religions, mysteries, laws, and fables, ever sat up so late with the ladies and priests and *presidents de parlement* at Memphis, as I do here — and consequently were not half so well qualified as I am to new model

a commonwealth. I have learned how to make remonstrances, and how to answer them. The latter, it seems, is a science much wanted in my own country[1]—and yet is as easy and obvious as their treatment of trees, and not very unlike it. It was delivered many years ago in an oracular sentence of my namesake—

Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo.

You must drive away the vulgar, and you must have an hundred and fifty thousand men to drive them away with—that is all. I do not wonder the intendant of Rouen thinks we are still in a state of barbarism, when we are ignorant of the very rudiments of government.

The duke and duchess of Richmond have been here a few days, and are gone to Aubigné. I do not think him at all well, and am exceedingly concerned for it, as I know no man who has more estimable qualities. They return by the end of the month. I am fluctuating whether I shall not return with them, as they have pressed me to do, through Holland. I never was there, and could never go so agreeably; but then it would protract

[1] Alluding to the number of remonstrances under the name of petitions, which were presented this year from the livery of London and many other corporate bodies, on the subject of the Middlesex election.

my absence three weeks, and I am impatient to be in my own cave, notwithstanding the wisdom I imbibe every day. But one cannot sacrifice one's self wholly to the public: Titus and Wilkes have now and then lost a day. Adieu, my dear lord! Be assured that I shall not disdain yours and lady Strafford's conversation, though you have nothing but the goodness of your hearts, and the simplicity of your manners, to recommend you to the more enlightened understanding of

Your old friend.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Paris, Sunday night, Sept. 17, 1769.

I AM heartily tired; but as it is too early to go to bed, I must tell you how agreeably I have passed the day. I wished for you; the same scenes strike us both, and the same kind of visions has amused us both ever since we were born.

Well then: I went this morning to Versailles with my niece Mrs. Cholmondeley, Mrs. Hart, lady Denbigh's sister, and the count de Grave, one of the most amiable, humane, and obliging men alive. Our first object was to see Madame du Barri. Being too early for mass, we saw the dauphin and his brothers at dinner. The eldest is the picture of the duke of Grafton, except that he

is more fair, and will be taller. He has a sickly air, and no grace. The count de Provence has a very pleasing countenance, with an air of more sense than the count d'Artois, the genius of the family. They already tell as many *bon-mots* of the latter as of Henri quatre and Louis quatorze. He is very fat, and the most like his grandfather of all the children. You may imagine this royal mess did not occupy us long: thence to the chapel, where a first row in the balconies was kept for us. Madame du Barri arrived over against us below, without rouge, without powder, and indeed *sans avoir fait sa toilette;* an odd appearance, as she was so conspicuous, close to the altar, and amidst both court and people. She is pretty, when you consider her; yet so little striking, that I never should have asked who she was. There is nothing bold, assuming, or affected in her manner. Her husband's sister was along with her. In the tribune above, surrounded by prelates, was the amorous and still handsome king. One could not help smiling at the mixture of piety, pomp, and carnality. From chapel we went to the dinner of the elder Mesdames. We were almost stifled in the anti-chamber, where their dishes were heating over charcoal, and where we could not stir for the press. When the doors are opened every body rushes in, princes of the blood, *cordons bleus*, abbés, housemaids, and the Lord knows who and what. Yet so used are their highnesses to this

trade, that they eat as comfortably and heartily as you or I could do in our own parlours.

Our second act was much more agreeable. We quitted the court and a reigning mistress, for a dead one and a cloister. In short, I had obtained leave from the bishop of Chartres to enter *into* St. Cyr; and as Madame du Deffand never leaves any thing undone that can give me satisfaction, she had written to the abbess to desire I might see every thing that could be seen there. The bishop's order was to admit me, *Monsieur de Grave et les dames de ma compagnie;* I begged the abbess to give me back the order, that I might deposit it in the archives of Strawberry, and she complied instantly. Every door flew open to us: and the nuns vied in attentions to please us. The first thing I desired to see was Madame de Maintenon's apartment. It consists of two small rooms, a library, and a very small chamber, the same in which the czar saw her, and in which she died. The bed is taken away, and the room covered now with bad pictures of the royal family, which destroys the gravity and simplicity. It is wainscotted with oak, with plain chairs of the same, covered with dark blue damask. Every where else the chairs are of blue cloth. The simplicity and extreme neatness of the whole house, which is vast, are very remarkable. A large apartment above, (for that I have mentioned is on the ground floor)

consisting of five rooms, and destined by Louis quatorze for madame de Maintenon, is now the infirmary, with neat white linen beds, and decorated with every text of scripture, by which could be insinuated that the foundress was a queen. The hour of vespers being come, we were conducted to the chapel, and as it was *my* curiosity that had led us thither, I was placed in the Maintenon's own tribune; my company in the adjoining gallery. The pensioners two and two, each band headed by a nun, march orderly to their seats, and sing the whole service, which, I confess, was not a little tedious. The young ladies to the number of two hundred and fifty are dressed in black, with short aprons of the same, the latter and their stays bound with blue, yellow, green, or red, to distinguish the classes; the captains and lieutenants have knots of a different colour for distinction. Their hair is curled and powdered, their coiffeure a sort of French round-eared caps, with white tippets, a sort of ruff and large tucker: in short, a very pretty dress. The nuns are entirely in black, with crape veils and long trains, deep white handkerchiefs, and forehead clothes, and a very long train. The chapel is plain but very pretty, and in the middle of the choir under a flat marble lies the foundress. Madame de Cambis, one of the nuns, who are about forty, is beautiful as a Madonna. The abbess has no distinction but a larger and richer

gold cross: her apartment consists of two very small rooms. Of madame de Maintenon we did not see fewer than twenty pictures. The young one looking over her shoulder has a round face, without the least resemblance to those of her latter age. That in the royal mantle, of which you know I have a copy, is the most repeated; but there is another with a longer and leaner face, which has by far the most sensible look. She is in black, with a high point head and band, a long train, and is sitting in a chair of purple velvet. Before her knees stands her niece madame de Noailles, a child; at a distance a view of Versailles or St. Cyr, I could not distinguish which. We were shown some rich reliquaires, and the corpo santo, that was sent to her by the pope. We were then carried into the public room of each class. In the first, the young ladies, who were playing at chess, were ordered to sing to us the chorusses of Athaliah; in another they danced minuets and country dances, while a nun, not quite so able as St. Cecilia, played on a violin. In the others they acted before us the proverbs or conversations written by madame de Maintenon for their instruction; for she was not only their foundress but their saint, and their adoration of her memory has quite eclipsed the Virgin Mary. We saw their dormitory, and saw them at supper; and at last were carried to their archives, where they produced volumes of her letters, and where

one of the nuns gave me a small piece of paper, with three sentences in her hand-writing. I forgot to tell you, that this kind dame, who took to me extremely, asked me if we had many convents and many relics in England. I was much embarrassed for fear of destroying her good opinion of me, and so said we had but few now. Oh! we went too to the *apothecairie*, where they treated us with cordials, and where one of the ladies told me inoculation was a sin, as it was a voluntary detention from mass, and as voluntary a cause of eating *gras*. Our visit concluded in the garden, now grown very venerable, where the young ladies played at little games before us. After a stay of four hours we took our leave. I begged the abbess's blessing; she smiled, and said, she doubted I should not place much faith in it. She is a comely old gentlewoman, and very proud of having seen madame de Maintenon. Well! was not I in the right to wish you with me? could you have passed a day more agreeably?

I will conclude my letter with a most charming trait of madame de Mailly, which cannot be misplaced in such a chapter of royal concubines. Going to St. Sulpice, after she had lost the king's heart, a person present desired the crowd to make way for her. Some brutal young officers said, "*Comment! pour cette catin là!*" She turned to them, and, with the most charming

modesty, said, "*Messieurs, puisque vous me connoissez; priez Dieu pour moi:*" I am sure it will bring tears into your eyes. Was not she the Publican, and Maintenon the Pharisee? Good night; I hope I am going to dream of all I have been seeing. As my impressions and my fancy, when I am pleased, are apt to be strong, my night, perhaps, may be still more productive of ideas than the day has been. It will be charming indeed, if madame de Cambis is the ruling tint. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Oct. 13, 1769.

I ARRIVED last night at eleven o'clock, and found a letter from you, which gave me so much pleasure, that I must write you a line, though I am hurried to death. You cannot imagine how rejoiced I am that lord North[1] drags you to light again; it is a satisfaction I little expected. When do you come? I am impatient. I long to know your projects.

---

[1] Lord North had appointed Mr. Montagu his private secretary.

I had a dreadful passage of eight hours, was drowned, though not shipwrecked, and was sick to death. I have been six times at sea before, and never suffered the least, which makes the mortification the greater: but as Hercules was not more robust than I, though with an air so little Herculean, I have not so much as caught cold, though I was wet to the skin with the rain, had my lap full of waves, was washed from head to foot in the boat at ten o'clock at night, and stepped into the sea up to my knees. *Qu' avois je à faire dans cette galere?* In truth, it is a little late to be seeking adventures. Adieu! I must finish, but I am excessively happy with what you have told me.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 16, 1769.

I ARRIVED at my own Louvre last Wednesday night, and am now at my Versailles. Your last letter reached me but two days before I left Paris, for I have been an age at Calais and upon the sea. I could execute no commission for you, and, in truth, you gave me no explicit one; but I have brought you a bit of china, and beg you will be content with a little present, instead of a

bargain. Said china is, or will be soon, in the custom-house; but I shall have it, I fear, long before you come to London.

I am sorry those boys got at my tragedy. I beg you would keep it under lock and key; it is not at all food for the public; at least not till I am *food for worms, good Percy.* Nay, it is not an age to encourage any body, that has the least vanity, to step forth. There is a total extinction of all taste: our authors are vulgar, gross, illiberal: the theatre swarms with wretched translations, and ballad operas, and we have nothing new but improving abuse. I have blushed at Paris, when the papers came over crammed with ribaldry, or with Garrick's insufferable nonsense about Shakespeare. As that man's writings will be preserved by his name, who will believe that he was a tolerable actor? Cibber wrote as bad odes, but then Cibber wrote the Careless Husband and his own life, which both deserve immortality. Garrick's prologues and epilogues are as bad as his Pindarics and pantomimes.

I feel myself here like a swan, that after living six weeks in a nasty pool upon a common, is got back into its own Thames. I do nothing but plume and clean myself, and enjoy the verdure and silver waves. Neatness and greenth are so essential in my opinion to the country, that in France, where I see nothing but chalk and dirty peasants, I seem in a terrestrial purgatory that is

neither town nor country. The face of England is so beautiful, that I do not believe Tempe or Arcadia were half so rural; for both lying in hot climates, must have wanted the turf of our lawns. It is unfortunate to have so pastoral a taste, when I want a cane more than a crook. We are absurd creatures; at twenty I loved nothing but London.

Tell me when you shall be in town. I think of passing most of my time here till after Christmas. Adieu;

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Tuesday, Nov. 14, 1769.

I AM here quite alone, and did not think of going to town till Friday for the opera, which I have not yet seen. In compliment to you and your countess I will make an effort, and be there on Thursday; and will either dine with you at your own house, or at your brother's; which you choose. This is a great favour, and beyond my lord Temple's journey to dine with my lord mayor.[1] I am so sick of the follies of all sides, that I am happy to be at quiet here, and to know no more of them than what I am forced to see in

[1] In the second mayoralty of William Beckford.

the newspapers; and those I skip over as fast as I can.

The account you give me of lady * * * was just the same as I received from Paris. I will show you a very particular letter I received by a private hand from thence; which convinces me that I guessed right, contrary to all the wise, that the journey to Fontainbleau would overset monsieur de Choiseul. I think he holds but by a thread, which will snap soon. I am labouring hard with the duchess[2] to procure the duke of Richmond satisfaction in the favour he has asked about his duchy;[3] but he shall not know it till it is completed, if I can be so lucky as to succeed. I think I shall, if they do not fall immediately.

You perceive how barren I am, and why I have not written to you. I pass my time in clipping and pasting prints; and do not think I have read forty pages since I came to England. I bought a poem called Trincalo's Trip to the Jubilee; having been struck with two lines in an extract in the papers,

> And the ear-piercing fife,
> And the ear-piercing wife—

Alas! all the rest, and it is very long, is a heap of unintelligible nonsense, about Shakespeare,

---

2. The duchess of Choiseul.

3. Of Aubigné.

politics, and the Lord knows what. I am grieved that, with our admiration of Shakespeare, we can do nothing but write worse than ever he did. One would think the age studied nothing but his Love's Labour Lost, and Titus Andronicus. Politics and abuse have totally corrupted our taste. Nobody thinks of writing a line that is to last beyond the next fortnight. We might as well be given up to controversial divinity. The times put me in mind of the Constantinopolitan empire; where, in an age of learning, the subtlest wits of Greece contrived to leave nothing behind them, but the memory of their follies and acrimony. Milton did not write his Paradise Lost till he had outlived his politics. With all his parts, and noble sentiments of liberty, who would remember him for his barbarous prose? Nothing is more true than that extremes meet. The licentiousness of the press makes us as savage as our Saxon ancestors, who could only set their marks; and an outrageous pursuit of individual independence, grounded on selfish views, extinguishes genius as much as despotism does. The public good of our country is never thought of by men that hate half their country. Heroes confine their ambition to be leaders of the mob. Orators seek applause from their faction, not from posterity; and ministers forget foreign enemies, to defend themselves against a majority in parliament. When any Cæsar has conquered

Gaul, I will excuse him for aiming at the perpetual dictature. If he has only jockeyed somebody out of the borough of Veii or Falernum, it is too impudent to call himself a patriot or a statesman. Adieu!

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, Dec. 14, 1769.

Dear Sir,

This is merely a line to feel my way, and to know how to direct to you. Mr. Granger thinks you are established at Milton, and thither I address it. If it reaches you, you will be so good as to let me know, and I will write again soon.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 14, 1769.

I cannot be silent, when I feel for you. I doubt not but the loss of Mrs. Trevor is very sensible to you, and I am heartily sorry for you. One cannot live any time, and not perceive the world slip way, as it were, from under one's feet: one's friends, one's connections drop off, and indeed reconcile one to the same passage; but why repeat these

things? I do not mean to write a fine consolation; all I intended was to tell you, that I cannot be indifferent to what concerns you.

I know as little how to amuse you; news there are none but politics, and politics there will be as long as we have a shilling left. They are no amusement to me, except in seeing two or three sets of people worry one another, for none of whom I care a straw.

Mr. Cumberland has produced a comedy called the Brothers. It acts well, but reads ill, though I can distinguish strokes of Mr. Bentley in it. Very few of the characters are marked, and the serious ones have little nature, and the comic ones are rather too much marked; however, the three middle acts diverted me very well.

I saw the bishop of Durham at Carlton-house, who told me he had given you a complete suit of armour. I hope you will have no occasion to lock yourself in it, though, between the fools and the knaves of the present time, I don't know but we may be reduced to defend our castles. If you retain any connections with Northampton, I should be much obliged to you if you could procure from thence a print of an alderman Backwell. It is valuable for nothing but its rarity, and is not to be met with but there. I would give eight or ten shillings rather than not have it. When shall you look towards us? how does your brother John?

make my compliments to him. I need not say how much I am

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 31, 1770.

I SHALL be extremely obliged to you for alderman Backwell. A scarce print is a real present to me, who have a table of weights and measures in my head very different from that of the rich and covetous.

I am glad your journey was prosperous. The weather here has continued very sharp, but it has been making preparations for April to-day, and watered the streets with some soft showers. They will send me to Strawberry to-morrow, where I hope to find the lilacs beginning to put forth their little noses. Mr. Chute mends very slowly, but you know he has as much patience as gout.

I depend upon seeing you whenever you return this wayward. You will find the round chamber far advanced, though not finished, for my undertakings do not stride with the impetuosity of my youth. This single room has been half as long in completing as all the rest of the castle. My com-

pliments to Mr. John, whom I hope to see at the same time.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, May 6, 1770.

If you are like me, you are fretting at the weather. We have not a leaf yet large enough to make an apron for a Miss Eve at two years old. Flowers and fruits, if they come at all this year, must meet together as they do in a Dutch picture; our lords and ladies however couple as if it were the real *Gioventu dell'anno*. Lord Albemarle, you know, has disappointed all his brothers and my niece; and lord Fitzwilliam is declared *sposo* to lady Charlotte Ponsonby. It is a pretty match, and makes lord Besborough as happy as possible.

Masquerades proceed in spite of church and king. The bishop of London persuaded that good soul the archbishop to remonstrate against them, but happily the age prefers silly follies to serious ones, and dominos, *comme de raison*, carry it against lawn sleeves.

There is a new institution that begins to make, and if it proceeds, will make a considerable noise. It is a club of both sexes to be erected at Almac's, on the mode of that of the men of White's.

Mrs. Fitzroy, lady Pembroke, Mrs. Meynel, lady Molyneux, miss Pelham, and miss Loyd, are the foundresses. I am ashamed to say I am of so young and fashionable a society; but as they are people I live with, I choose to be idle rather than morose. I can go to a young supper, without forgetting how much sand is run out of the hour-glass. Yet I shall never pass a triste old age in turning the psalms into Latin or English verse. My plan is to pass away calmly; cheerfully if I can; sometimes to amuse myself with the rising generation, but to take care not to fatigue them, nor weary them with old stories, which will not interest them, as their adventures do not interest me. Age would indulge prejudices if it did not sometimes polish itself against younger acquaintance; but it must be the work of folly if one hopes to contract friendship with them, or desires it, or thinks one can become the same follies, or expects that they should do more than bear one for one's good humour. In short, they are a pleasant medicine, that one should take care not to grow fond of. Medicines hurt when habit has annihilated their force; but you see I am in no danger. I intend by degrees to decrease my opium, instead of augmenting the dose. Good night; you see I never let our long-lived friendship drop, though you give it so few opportunities of breathing.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 11, 1770.

My company and I have wished for you very much to-day. The duchess of Portland, Mrs. Delany, Mr. Bateman, and your cousin, Fred. Montagu, dined here. Lord Guildford was very obliging; and would have come if he dared have ventured. Mrs. Montagu was at Bill-hill with lady Gower. The day was tolerable, with sun enough for the house, though not for the garden. You, I suppose, never will come again, as I have not a team of horses large enough to draw you out of the clay of Oxfordshire.

I went yesterday to see my niece in her new principality of Ham. It delighted me and made me peevish. Close to the Thames, in the centre of all rich and verdant beauty, it is so blocked up and barricaded with walls, vast trees, and gates, that you think yourself an hundred miles off, and an hundred years back. The old furniture is so magnificently ancient, dreary, and decayed, that at every step one's spirits sink, and all my passion for antiquity could not keep them up. Every minute I expected to see ghosts sweeping by; ghosts I would not give sixpence to see, Lauderdales, Tollemaches, and Maitlands. There is an old brown gallery full of Vandycks and Lelys; charming miniatures, delightful Wouvermans, and

Polenburghs, china, japan, bronzes, ivory cabinets, and silver dogs, pokers, bellows, &c. without end. One pair of bellows is of filigree. In this state of pomp and tatters my nephew intends it shall remain, and is so religious an observer of the venerable rites of his house, that because the iron gates never were opened by his father but once for the late lord Granville, you are locked out and locked in, and after journeying all round the house, as you do round an old French fortified town, you are at last admitted through the stable-yard to creep along a dark passage by the house-keeper's room, and so by a back door into the great hall. He seems as much afraid of water as a cat; for though you might enjoy the Thames from every window of three sides of the house, you may tumble into it before you would guess it is there. In short, our ancestors had so little idea of taste and beauty, that I should not have been surprised if they had hung their pictures with the painted sides to the wall. Think of such a palace commanding all the reach of Richmond and Twickenham, with a domain from the foot of Richmond-hill to Kingston-bridge, and then imagine its being as dismal and prospectless as if it stood

On Stanmore's wintry wild!

I don't see why a man should not be divorced from his prospect as well as from his wife, for not

being able to enjoy it. Lady Dysart frets, but it is not the etiquette of the family to yield, and so she must content herself with her chateau of Tondertentronk as well as she can. She has another such ample prison in Suffolk, and may be glad to reside where she is. Strawberry, with all its painted glass and gloomth, looked as gay when I came home as Mrs. Cornelis's ball-room.

I am very busy about the last volume of my Painters, but have lost my index, and am forced again to turn over all my Vertues, forty volumes of miniature MSS.; so this will be the third time I shall have made an index to them. Don't say I am not persevering, and yet I thought I was grown idle. What pains one takes to be forgotten! Good night.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 29, 1770.

Since the sharp mountain will not come to the little hill, the little hill must go to the mountain. In short, what do you think of seeing me walk into your parlour a few hours after this epistle! I had not time to notify myself sooner. The case is, princess Amelia has insisted on my going with her to, that is, meeting her at Stowe on Monday, for a

week. She mentioned it to me some time ago, and I thought I had parried it, but having been with her at Park-place these two or three days, she has commanded it so positively, that I could not refuse. Now, as it would be extremely inconvenient to my indolence to be dressed up in weepers and hatbands by six o'clock in the morning, and lest I should be taken for chief mourner going to Beckford's funeral, I trust you will be charitable enough to give me a bed at Adderbury for one night, whence I can arrive at Stowe in a decent time, and caparisoned as I ought to be, when I have lost a brother-in-law, and am to meet a princess. Don't take me for a Lausun, and think all this favour portends a *second* marriage between our family and the blood royal; nor that my visit to Stowe implies my espousing Miss Wilks. I think I shall die as I am, neither higher nor lower; and, above all things, no more politics. Yet I shall have many a private smile to myself, as I wander among all those consecrated and desecrated buildings, and think what company I am in, and of all that is past; but I must shorten my letter, or you will not have finished it when I arrive. Adieu!

Yours, a coming! a coming!

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Adderbury, Sunday night, July 1, 1770.

You will be enough surprised to receive a letter from me dated from your own house, and may judge of my mortification at not finding you here; exactly as it happened two years ago. In short, here I am, and will tell you how I came here; in truth, not a little against my will. I have been at Park-place with princess Amelia, and she insisted on my meeting her at Stowe to-morrow. She had mentioned it before, and as I have no delight in a royal progress, and as little in the seigneur Temple, I waved the honour and pleasure, and thought I should hear no more of it. However, the proposal was turned into a command, and every body told me I could not refuse. Well, I could not come so near, and not call upon you; besides it is extremely *convenient to my lord Castlecomer*, for it would have been horrid to set out at seven o'clock in the morning, full dressed in my weepers, and to step out of my chaise into a drawing-room. I wrote to you on Friday, the soonest I could after this was settled, to notify myself to you, but find I am arrived before my letter. Mrs. White is all goodness; and being the first of July, and consequently, the middle of winter, has given me a good fire and some excellent coffee and bread and butter, and I am as comfortable as possible, ex-

cept in having missed you. She insists on acquainting you, which makes me write this to prevent your coming; for as I must depart at twelve o'clock to-morrow, it would be dragging you home before your time for only half an hour, and I have too much regard for lord Guildford to deprive him of your company. Don't therefore think of making this unnecessary compliment. I have treated your house like an inn, and it will not be friendly, if you do not make as free with me. I had much rather that you would take it for a visit that you ought to repay. Make my best compliments to your brother and lord Guildford, and pity me for the six dreadful days I am going to pass. Rosette is fast asleep in your chair, or I am sure she would write a postscript. I cannot say she is either commanded or invited to be of this royal party; but have me, have my dog.

I must not forget to thank you for mentioning Mrs. Wetenhall, on whom I should certainly wait with great pleasure, but have no manner of intention of going into Cheshire. There is not a chair or stool in Cholmondeley, and my nephew, I believe, will pull it down. He has not a fortune to furnish or inhabit it; and if his uncle should leave him one he would choose a pleasanter country. Adieu! Don't be formal with me, and don't trouble your hand about

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday night, July 7, 1770.

AFTER making an inn of your house, it is but decent to thank you for my entertainment, and so acquaint you with the result of my journey. The party passed off much better than I expected. A princess at the head of a very small set for five days together did not promise well. However, she was very good-humoured, and easy, and dispensed with a large quantity of etiquette. Lady Temple is good-nature itself, my lord was very civil, lord Besborough is made to suit all sorts of people, lady Mary Coke respects royalty too much not to be very condescending, lady Anne Howard and Mrs. Middleton filled up the drawing-room, or rather made it out, and I was so determined to carry it off as well as I could, and happened to be in such good spirits, and took such care to avoid politics, that we laughed a great deal, and had not one cloud the whole time.

We breakfasted at half an hour after nine; but the princess did not appear till it was finished; then we walked in the garden, or drove about in cabriolets, till it was time to dress: dined at three, which, though properly proportioned to the smallness of company to avoid ostentation, lasted a vast while, as the princess eats and talks a great

deal; then again into the garden till past seven, when we came in, drank tea and coffee, and played at pharaoh till ten, when the princess retired, and we went to supper, and before twelve to bed. You see, there was great sameness and little vivacity in all this. It was a little broken by fishing, and going round the park one of the mornings; but, in reality, the number of buildings and variety of scenes in the garden, made each day different from the rest, and my meditations on so historic a spot prevented my being tired. Every acre brings to one's mind some instance of the parts or pedantry, of the taste or want of taste, of the ambition, or love of fame, or greatness, or miscarriages of those that have inhabited, decorated, planned, or visited the place. Pope, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Kent, Gibbs, lord Cobham, lord Chesterfield, the mob of nephews, the Lyttletons, Granvilles, Wests, Leonidas Glover, and Wilkes, the late prince of Wales, the king of Denmark, princess Amelia, and the proud monuments of lord Chatham's services, now enshrined there, then anathematized there, and now again commanding there, with the temple of friendship, like the temple of Janus, sometimes open to war, and sometimes shut up in factious cabals — all these images crowd upon one's memory, and add visionary personages to the charming scenes, that are so enriched with fanes and temples, that the

real prospects are little less than visions themselves.

On Wednesday night a small Vauxhall was acted for us at the grotto in the Elysian fields, which was illuminated with lamps, as were the thicket and two little barks on the lake. With a little exaggeration I could make you believe that nothing was so delightful. The idea was really pretty, but as my feelings have lost something of their romantic sensibility, I did not quite enjoy such an entertainment *al fresco* so much as I should have done twenty years ago. The evening was more than cool, and the destined spot any thing but dry. There were not half lamps enough, and no music but an ancient militia man, who played cruelly on a squeaking tabor and pipe. As our procession descended the vast flight of steps into the garden, in which was assembled a crowd of people from Buckingham and the neighbouring villages to see the princess and the show, the moon shining very bright, I could not help laughing as I surveyed our troop, which, instead of tripping lightly to such an Arcadian entertainment, were hobbling down by the ballustrades, wrapped up in cloaks and great coats for fear of catching cold. The earl, you know, is bent double, the countess very lame; I am a miserable walker, and the princess, though as strong as a Brunswick lion, makes no figure in

going down fifty stone stairs. Except lady Anne, and by courtesy lady Mary, we were none of us young enough for a pastoral. We supped in the grotto, which is as proper to this climate as a sea-coal fire would be in the dog-days at Tivoli.

But the chief entertainment of the week, at at least what was so to the princess, was an arch, which lord Temple has erected to her honour in the most enchanting of all picturesque scenes. It is inscribed on one side, Amelia Sophia Aug. and has a medallion of her on the other. It is placed on an eminence at the top of the Elysian fields, in a grove of orange trees. You come to it on a sudden, and are startled with delight on looking through it: you at once see, through a glade, the river winding at bottom; from which a thicket arises, arched over with trees, but opened, and discovering a hillock full of hay-cocks, beyond which in front is the Palladian bridge, and again over that a larger hill crowned with the castle. It is a tall landscape framed by the arch and the overbowering trees, and comprehending more beauties of light, shade, and buildings, than any picture of Albano I ever saw.

Between the flattery and the prospect the princess was really in Elysium: she visited her arch four or five times every day, and could not satiate herself with it. The statues of Apollo and the muses stand on each side of the arch. One day

she found in Apollo's hand the following lines, which I had written for her, and communicated to lord Temple:

T'other day, with a beautiful frown on her brow,
To the rest of the gods said the Venus of Stowe,
What a fuss is here made with that arch just erected!
How *our* temples are slighted, our altars neglected!
Since yon nymph has appear'd, *we* are noticed no more,
All resort to *her* shrine, all *her* presence adore;
And what's more provoking, before all our faces,
Temple thither has drawn both the muses and graces.
Keep you temper, dear child, Phœbus cried with a smile,
Nor this happy, this amiable festival spoil.
Can your shrine any longer with garlands be dress'd?
When a true goddess reigns, all the false are suppress'd.

If you will keep my counsel, I will own to you, that originally the two last lines were much better, but I was forced to alter them out of decorum, not to be too pagan upon the occasion; in short, here they are as in the first sketch,—

Recollect, once before that our oracle ceased,
When a real divinity rose in the east.

So many heathen temples around had made me talk as a Roman poet would have done: but I corrected my verses, and have made them insipid enough to offend nobody. Good night. I am rejoiced to be once more in the gay solitude of my own little Tempe.

Yours ever.

To the EARL of STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, July 9, 1770.

I am not going to tell you, my dear lord, of the diversions or honours of Stowe, which I conclude lady Mary has writ to lady Strafford. Though the week passed cheerfully enough, it was more glory than I should have sought of my own head. The journeys to Stowe and Park-place have deranged my projects so that I don't know where I am, and I wish they have not given me the gout into the bargain; for I am come back very lame, and not at all with the bloom that one ought to have imported from the Elysian-fields. Such jaunts when one is growing old is playing with edged-tools, as my lord Chesterfield, in one of his Worlds, makes the husband say to his wife, when she pretends that gray powder does not become her. It is charming at twenty to play at Elysian-fields, but it is no joke at fifty; or too great a joke. It made me laugh as we were descending the great flight of steps from the house to go and sup in the grotto on the banks of Helicon: we were so cloaked up, for the evening was very cold, and so many of us were limping and hobbling, that Charon would have easily believed we were going

to ferry over in earnest. It is with much more comfort that I am writing to your lordship in the great bow window of my new round room, which collects all the rays of the south-west sun, and composes a sort of summer; a feel I have not known this year, except last Thursday. If the rains should ever cease, and the weather settle to fine, I shall pay you my visit at Wentworth-castle; but hitherto the damps have affected me so much, that I am more disposed to return to London and light my fire, than brave the humours of a climate so capricious and uncertain, in the country. I cannot help thinking it grows worse: I certainly remember such a thing as dust; nay, I still have a clear idea of it, though I have seen none for some years, and should put some grains in a bottle for a curiosity, if it should ever fly again.

News I know none. You may be sure it was a subject carefully avoided at Stowe; and Beckford's death had not raised the glass or spirits of the master of the house. The papers make one sick with talking of that noisy vapouring fool, as they would of Algernon Sidney.

I have not happened to see your future nephew, though we have exchanged visits. It was the first time I had been at Marble-hill, since poor lady Suffolk's death; and the impression was so uneasy, that I was not sorry not to find him at home. Adieu, my good lord! Except seeing you both,

nothing can be more agreeable than to hear of yours and lady Strafford's health, who, I hope, continues perfectly well.

Your most faithful humble servant.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, July 12, 1770.

Reposing under my laurels! No, no, I am reposing in a much better tent, under the tester of my own bed. I am not obliged to rise by break of day and be dressed for the drawing-room; I may saunter in my slippers till dinner-time, and not make bows till my back is as much out of joint as my lord Temple's. In short, I should die of the gout or fatigue, if I was to be Polonius to a princess for another week. Twice a-day we made a pilgrimage to almost every heathen temple in that province that they call a garden; and there is no sallying out of the house without descending a flight of steps as high as St. Paul's. My lord Besborough would have dragged me up to the top of the column, to see all the kingdoms of the earth; but I would not, if he could have given them to me. To crown all, because we live under the line, and that we were all of us giddy young creatures, of near threescore, we supped in

a grotto in the Elysian fields, and were refreshed with rivers of dew and gentle showers that dripped from all the trees; and put us in mind of the heroic ages, when kings and queens were shepherds and shepherdesses, and lived in caves, and were wet to the skin two or three times a-day. Well! thank heaven, I am emerged from that Elysium, and once more in a Christian country!—Not but, to say the truth, our pagan landlord and landlady were very obliging, and the party went off much better than I expected. We had no very recent politics, though volumes about the Spanish war; and as I took care to give every thing a ludicrous turn as much as I could, the princess was diverted, the six days rolled away, and the seventh is my sabbath; and I promise you I will do no manner of work, I, nor my cat, nor my dog, nor any thing that is mine. For this reason, I entreat that the journey to Goodwood may not take place before the 12th of August, when I will attend you. But this expedition to Stowe has quite blown up my intended one to Wentworth-castle: I have not resolution enough left for such a journey. Will you and lady Ailesbury come to Strawberry before or after Goodwood? I know you like being dragged from home as little as I do; therefore you shall place that visit just when it is most convenient to you.

I came to town the night before last, and am just returning. There are not twenty people in

all London. Are not you in despair about the summer? It is horrid to be ruined in coals in June and July. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 14, 1770.

I SEE by the papers this morning that Mr. Jenkinson is dead. He had the reversion of my place, which would go away, if I should lose my brother. I have no pretensions to ask it, and you know it has long been my fixed resolution not to accept it. But as lord North is your particular friend, I think it right to tell you, that you may let him know what it is worth, that he may give it to one of his own sons, and not bestow it on somebody else, without being apprized of its value. I have seldom received less than fourteen hundred a year in money, and my brother, I think, has four more from it. There are besides many places in the gift of the office, and one or two very considerable. Do not mention this but to lord North, or lord Guildford. It is unnecessary I am sure for me to say to you, but I would wish them to be assured that in saying this, I am incapable of, and above any finesse, or view, to myself. I refused

the reversion for myself several years ago, when lord Holland was secretary of state, and offered to obtain it for me. Lord Bute, I believe, would have been very glad to have given it to me, before he gave it to Jenkinson, but I say it very seriously, and you know me enough to be certain I am in earnest, that I would not accept it upon any account. Any favour lord North will do for you will give me all the satisfaction I desire. I am near fifty-three, I have neither ambition nor interest to gratify. I can live comfortably for the remainder of my life, though I should be poorer by fourteen hundred pounds a year; but I should have no comfort if, in the dregs of life, I did any thing that I would not do when I was twenty years younger. I will trust to you, therefore, to make use of this information in the friendly manner I mean it, and to prevent my being hurt by its being taken otherwise than as a design to serve those to whom you wish well. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday.

I AM sorry I wrote to you last night, for I find it is Mrs. Jenkinson that is dead, and not Mr. and

therefore I should be glad to have this arrive time enough to prevent your mentioning the contents of my letter. In that case I should not be concerned to have given you that mark of my constant good wishes, nor to have talked to you of my affairs, which are as well in your breast as my own. They never disturb me; for my mind has long taken its stamp, and as I shall leave nobody much younger than myself behind me, for whom I am solicitous, I have no desire beyond being easy for the rest of my life: I could not be so if I stooped to have obligations to any man beyond what it would ever be in my power to return. When I was in parliament, I had the additional reason of choosing to be entirely free; and my strongest reason of all is, that I will be at liberty to speak truth both living and dead. This outweighs all considerations of interest, and will convince you, though I believe you do not want that conviction, that my yesterday's letter was as sincere in its resolution as in its professions to you. Let the matter drop entirely, as it is now of no consequence. Adieu;

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 3, 1770.

I AM going on in the sixth week of my fit, and having had a return this morning in my knee, I cannot flatter myself with any approaching prospect of recovery. The gate of painful age seems open to me, and I must travel through it as I may! If you have not written one word for another, I am at a loss to understand you. You say you have taken a house in London for a year, that you are gone to Waldeshare for *six months*, and then shall come for the winter. Either you mean six *weeks*, or differ with most people in reckoning April the beginning of winter. I hope your pen was in a hurry, rather than your calculation so uncommon; I certainly shall be glad of your residing in London. I have long wished to live nearer to you, but it was in happier days. I am now so dismayed by these returns of gout, that I can promise myself few comforts in any future scenes of my life. I am much obliged to lord Guildford and lord North, and was very sorry that the latter came to see Strawberry in so bad a day, and when I was so extremely ill, and full of pain, that I scarce knew he was here; and as my coachman was gone to London to fetch me bootikins, there was no carriage to offer him: but indeed, in the condition I

then was, I was not capable of doing any of the honours of my house, suffering at once in my hand, knee, and both feet. I am still lifted out of bed by two servants; and by their help travel from my bed-chamber down to the couch in my blue room; but I shall conclude, rather than tire you with so unpleasant a history. Adieu,

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Oct. 16, 1770.

At last I have been able to remove to London; but though seven long weeks are gone and over since I was seized, I am only able to creep about upon a flat floor, but cannot go up and down stairs. However, I have patience, as I can at least fetch a book for myself, instead of having a servant bring me a wrong one.

I am much obliged to lord Guildford for his goodness to me, and beg my thanks to him. When you go to Canterbury, pray don't wake the black prince; I am very unwarlike, and desire to live the rest of my time upon the stock of glory I saved to my share out of the last war.

I know not more news than I did at Strawberry; there are not more people in town than I

saw there, and I intend to return thither on Friday or Saturday. Adieu;

Yours ever.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Arlington-street, Oct. 16, 1770.

THOUGH I have so very little to say, it is but my duty, my dear lord, to thank you for your extreme goodness to me and your inquiring after me. I was very bad again last week, but have mended so much since Friday night, that I really now believe the fit is over. I came to town on Sunday, and can creep about my room even without a stick, which is more felicity to me than if I had got a white one. I do not aim yet at such preferment as walking up stairs; but having moulted my stick, I flatter myself I shall come forth again without being lame.

The few I have seen tell me there is nobody else in town. That is no grievance to me, when I should be at the mercy of all that should please to bestow their idle time upon me. I know nothing of the war-egg, but that sometimes it is to be hatched, and sometimes to be addled. Many folks get into the nest and sit as hard upon it as they can, concluding it will produce a golden chick.

As I shall not be a feather the better for it, I hate that game-breed, and prefer the old hen Peace and her dunghill brood. My compliments to my lady and all her poultry.

I am, my dear lord,
your infinitely obliged and faithful
humble servant.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1770.

Dear Sir,

If you have not engaged your interest in Cambridgeshire, you would oblige me much by bestowing it on young Mr. Brand, the son of my particular acquaintance, and our old school-fellow. I am very unapt to trouble my head about elections, but wish success to this.

If you see Bannerman, I should be glad you would tell him, that I am going to print the last volume of my Painters, and should like to employ him again for some of the heads, if he cares to undertake them: though there will be a little trouble, as he does not reside in London. I am in a hurry, and am forced to be brief, but am always glad to hear of you, and from you.

Yours most sincerely.

P. S. Mr. Tyson promised me all his etchings, but has forgot me.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, Nov. 20, 1770.

I BELIEVE our letters crossed one another without knowing it. Mine, it seems, was quite unnecessary, for I find Mr. Brand has given up the election. Yours was very kind and obliging, as they always are. Pray be so good as to thank Mr. Tyson for me a thousand times; I am vastly pleased with his work, and hope he will give me another of the plates for my volume of heads, (for I shall bind up his present) and I by no means relinquish his promise of a complete set of his etchings, and of a visit to Strawberry-hill. Why should it not be with you and Mr. Essex, whom I shall be very glad to see—but what do you talk of a single day? Is that all you allow me in two years?

I rejoice to see Mr. Bentham's advertisement at last. I depend on you, dear sir, for procuring me his book the instant it is possible to have it. Pray make my compliments to all that good family.

I am enraged and almost in despair at Pearson the glass-painter, he is so idle and dissolute—he

has done very little of the window, though what he has done is glorious, and approaches very nearly to Price.

My last volume of Painters begins to be printed this week; but, as the plates are not begun, I doubt it will be long before the whole is ready. I mentioned to you in my last Thursday's letter a hint about Bannerman, the engraver. Adieu.

Dear sir,

Yours most sincerely.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, Dec. 20th, 1770.

Dear Sir,

I am very zealous, as you know, for the work, but I agree with you in expecting very little success from the plan. Activity is the best implement in such undertakings, and that seems to be wanting; and, without that, it were vain to think of who would be at the expense. I do not know whether it were not best that Mr. Essex should publish his remarks as simply as he can. For my own part I can do no more than I have done,—sketch out the plan. I grow too old and am grown too indolent to engage in any more works: nor have I time. I wish to finish some things I have by me, and to have done. The last volume of my Anecdotes, of

which I was tired, is completed; and with them I shall take my leave of publications. The last years of one's life are fit for nothing but idleness and quiet, and I am as indifferent to fame as to politics.

I can be of as little use to Mr. Granger in recommending him to the Antiquarian Society. I dropped my attendance there four or five years ago, from being sick of their ignorance and stupidity, and have not been three times amongst them since. They have chosen to expose their dulness to the world, and crowned it with dean Milles's nonsense. I have written a little answer to the last, which you shall see, and then wash my hands of them.

To say the truth, I have no very sanguine expectation about the Ely window. The glass-painter, though admirable, proves a very idle worthless fellow, and has yet scarce done any thing of consequence. I gave Dr. Nichols notice of his character, but found him apprised of it; the doctor however does not despair, but pursues him warmly. I wish it may succeed!

If you go over to Cambridge, be so good as to ask Mr. Gray when he proposes being in town: he talked of last month. I must beg you too to thank Mr. Tyson for his last letter. I can say no more to the plan than I have said. If he and Mr. Essex should like to come to town, I shall be very willing to talk it over with them, but I can

by no means think of engaging in any part of the composition.

These holidays I hope to have time to range my drawings, and give Bannerman some employment towards my book—but I am in no hurry to have it appear, as it speaks of times so recent; for though I have been very tender of not hurting any living relations of the artists: the latter were in general so indifferent, that I doubt their families will not be very well content with the coldness of the praises I have been able to bestow. This reason, with my unwillingness to finish the work, and the long interval between the composition of this and the other volumes, have, I doubt, made the greatest part a very indifferent performance. An author, like other mechanics, never does well when he is tired of his profession.

I have been told, that, besides Mr. Tyson, there are two other gentlemen engravers at Cambridge. I think their names are Sharp or Show, and Cobbe, but I am not at all sure of either. I should be glad however if I could procure any of their portraits—and I do not forget that I am already in your debt. Boydell is going to re-commence a suite of illustrious heads, and I am to give him a list of indubitable portraits of remarkable persons that have never been engraved; but I have protested against his receiving two sorts; the one, any old head of a family, when the person was moderately considerable; the other,

spurious or doubtful heads: both sorts apt to be sent in by families who wish to crowd their own names into the work, as was the case more than once in Houbraken's set, and of which honest Vertue often complained to me. The duke of Buckingham, Carr, earl of Somerset, and Thurloe, in that list, are absolutely not genuine — the first is John Digby, earl of Bristol.

I am, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Christmas day.

IF poplar-pines ever grow,[1] it must be in such a soaking season as this. I wish you would send half-a-dozen by some Henley barge to meet me next Saturday at Strawberry-hill, that they may be as tall as the monument by next summer. My cascades give themselves the airs of cataracts, and Mrs. Clive looks like the sun rising out of the

---

[1] The first poplar-pine (or, as they have since been called, Lombardy poplar) planted in England was at Park-place, on the bank of the river near the great arch. It was a cutting brought from Turin by the late lord Rochford in his carriage, and planted by general Conway's own hand.

ocean. Poor Mr. Raftor[2] is tired to death of their solitude; and as his passion is walking, he talks with rapture of the brave rows of lamps all along the streets, just as I used formerly to think no trees beautiful without lamps to them, like those at Vauxhall.

As I came to town but to dinner, and have not seen a soul, I do not know whether there is any news. I am just going to the princess,[3] where I shall hear all there is. I went to king Arthur on Saturday, and was tired to death, both of the nonsense of the piece and the execrable performance, the singers being still worse than the actors. The scenes are little better (though Garrick boasts of rivalling the French opera), except a pretty bridge, and a Gothic church with windows of painted glass. This scene, which should be a barbarous temple of Woden, is a perfect cathedral, and the devil officiates at a kind of high mass! I never saw greater absurdities.

Adieu!

---

[2] Brother to Mrs. Clive. He had been an actor himself, and, when his sister retired from the stage, lived with her in the house Mr. Walpole had given her at Twickenham.

[3] Princess Amelia.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Dec. 29, 1770.

The trees[1] came safe: I thank you for them: they are gone to Strawberry, and I am going to plant them. This paragraph would not call for a letter, but I have news for you of importance enough to dignify a dispatch. The duc de Choiseul is fallen! The express from lord Harcourt[2] arrived yesterday morning; the event happened last Monday night, and the courier set out so immediately, that not many particulars are yet known. The duke was allowed but three hours to prepare himself, and ordered to retire to his seat at Chanteloup: but some letters say, *Il ira plus loin.* The duc de Praslin is banished too, and Chatelet is forbidden to visit Choiseul. Chatelet was to have had the marine; and I am sure is no loss to us. The chevalier de Muy is made secretary of state *pour la guerre;* and it is concluded that the duc d'Aiguillon is prime-minister, but was not named so in the first hurry. There! there is a revolution! there is a new scene opened! Will it advance the war? Will it make peace? These are the questions all mankind

[1] The Lombardy poplars.

[2] Then ambassador at Paris.

is asking. This whale has swallowed up all gudgeon-questions. Lord Harcourt writes, that the d'Aiguillonists had officiously taken opportunities of assuring him, that if they prevailed it would be peace; but in this country we know that opponents turned ministers *can* change their language. It is added, that the morning of Choiseul's banishment, the king said to him, *Monsieur, je vous ai dit que je ne voulois pas la guerre.* Yet how does this agree with Francès's[3] eager protestations that Choiseul's fate depended on preserving the peace? How does it agree with the comptroller-general's offer of finding funds for the war, and of Choiseul's proving he could not?—But how reconcile half the politics one hears? De Guisnes and Francès sent their excuses to the duchess of Argyll last night; and I suppose the Spaniards too, for none of them were there.—Well! I shall let all this bustle cool for two days; for what Englishman does not sacrifice any thing to go his Saturday out of town?—And yet I am very much interested in this event; I feel much for madame de Choiseul, though nothing for her *Corsican* husband; but I am in the utmost anxiety for my dear old friend,[4] who passed every even-

---

3 Then the chargé des affaires from the French court in London.

4 Madame du Deffand.

ing with the duchess, and was thence in great credit; and what is worse, though nobody I think can be savage enough to take away her pension, she may find great difficulty to get it paid — and then her poor heart is so good and warm, that this blow on her friends, at her great age, may kill her. I have had no letter, nor had last post — whether it was stopped, or whether she apprehended the event, as I imagine — for every body observed, on Tuesday night, at your brother's, that Frances could not open his mouth. In short, I am most seriously alarmed about her.

You have seen in the papers the designed arrangements in the law. They now say there is some hitch; but I suppose it turns on some demands, and so will be got over by their being granted.

Mr. Mason, the bard, gave me yesterday the enclosed memorial, and begged I would recommend it to you. It is in favour of a very ingenious painter. Adieu! the sun shines brightly; but it is one o'clock, and it will be set before I get to Twickenham.

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, Jan. 10, 1771.

As I am acquainted with Mr. Paul Sandby, the brother of the architect, I asked him if there was a design, as I had heard, of making a print or prints of King's College Chapel, by the king's order? He answered directly, by no means. His brother made a general sketch of the chapel for the use of the lectures he reads on architecture at the Royal Academy. Thus, dear sir, Mr. Essex may be perfectly easy that there is no intention of interfering with his work. I then mentioned to Mr. Sandby Mr. Essex's plan, which he much approved, but said the plates would cost a great sum. The king, he thought, would be inclined to patronize the work; but I own I do not know how to get it laid before him. His own artists would probably discourage any scheme that might entrench on their own advantages. Mr. Thomas Sandby, the architect, is the only one of them I am acquainted with; and Mr. Essex must think whether he would like to let him into any participation of the work. If I can get any other person to mention it to his majesty, I will; but you know me, and that I have always kept clear of connections with courts and ministers, and have no interest with either, and perhaps my recom-

mendation might do as much hurt as good, especially as the artists in favour might be jealous of one who understands a little of their professions, and is apt to say what he thinks. In truth, there is another danger, which is, that they might not assist Mr. Essex without views of profiting of his labours. I am slightly acquainted with Mr. Chambers the architect, and have a good opinion of him: if Mr. Essex approves my communicating his plan to him or Mr. Sandby, I should think it more likely to succeed by their intervention, than by any lord of the court; for at last the king would certainly take the opinion of his artists. When you have talked this over with Mr. Essex, let me know the result. Till he has determined, there can be no use in Mr. Essex's coming to town.

I am much obliged to you, as I am continually, for the trouble you have taken to procure me Mr. Orde's, Mr. Topham's, and Mr. Sharpe's prints, and shall be very thankful for them. As to Roman antiquities, I do not collect prints of them, having engaged in too many other branches already.

Mr. Gray will bring down some of my drawings to Bannerman, and when you go over to Cambridge, I will beg you now and then to supervise him. For Mr. Bentham's book, I rather despair of it; and should it ever appear, he will have made people expect it too long, which will be of no service to it, though I do not doubt of its merit.

Mr. Gray will show you my answer to Dr. Milles.

I am, dear sir,
Your ever obliged humble servant.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 29, 1771.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE but time to write you a line, that I may not detain Mr. Essex, who is so good as to take charge of this note, and of a box, which I am sure will give you pleasure, and I beg may give you a little trouble. It contains the very valuable seven letters of Edward the sixth to Barnaby Fitzpatrick. Lord Ossory, to whom they belong, has lent them to me to print: but to facilitate that, and to prevent their being rubbed or hurt by the printer, I must entreat your exactness to copy them, and return them with the copies. I need not desire your particular care; for you value these things as much as I do, and will be able to make them out better than I can do, from being so much versed in old writing. Forgive my taking this liberty with you, which, I flatter myself, will not be disagreeable. Mr. Essex and Mr. Tyson dined with me at Strawberry-hill; but could not

stay so long as I wished. The party would have been still more agreeable, if you had made a fourth.

Adieu! dear sir,

Yours ever.

P. S. I am rejoiced you are delivered from the dread of inundations.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, June 11, 1771.

You are very kind, dear sir, and I ought to be, nay, what is more, I am, ashamed of giving you so much trouble; but I am in no hurry for the letters. I shall not set out till the 7th of next month, and it will be sufficient if I receive them a week before I set out.

Mr. C. C. C. C. is very welcome to attack me about a duchess of Norfolk. He is ever welcome to be in the right; to the edification I hope of all the matrons at the Antiquarian Society, who I trust will insert his criticism in the next volume of their *Archæologia*, or *Old Women's Logic*; but indeed I cannot bestow my time on any more of them, nor employ myself in detecting witches for vomiting pins. When they turn extortioners like

Mr. Masters,[1] the law should punish them, not only for roguery, but for exceeding their province, which our ancestors limited to killing their neighbour's cow, or crucifying dolls of wax. For my own part, I am so far from being out of charity with him, that I would give him a nag or new broom whenever he has a mind to ride to the Antiquarian sabbat, and preach against me. Though you have more cause to be angry, laugh at him as I do. One has not life enough to throw away on all the fools and knaves that come across one. I have often been attacked, and never replied but to Mr. Hume and Dr. Milles — to the first, because he had a name; to the second, because he had a mind to have one:— and yet I was in the wrong, for it was the only way he could attain one. In truth it is being too self-instructed, to expose only one's private antagonists, when one lets worse men pass unmolested. Does a booby hurt me by an attack on me more than by any

[1] There is a note on this letter in Cole's hand-writing. Mr. Mason had informed him, that Mr. Masters had lately read a paper at the Ant. Soc. against some mistake of Mr. Walpole's respecting a duchess of Norfolk, and he adds, "This I informed him [Mr. Walpole] of in my Letter, and said something to him of his [Masters'] extortion in making me pay 40*l.* towards the repairing his vicarage-house at Waterbeche, which he pretended he had fitted up for my reception."

other foolish thing he does? Does not he teaze me more by any thing he says to me without attacking me, than by any thing he says against me behind my back? I shall therefore most certainly never inquire after or read Mr. C. C. C. C's criticism, but leave him to oblivion with her grace of Norfolk, and our wise Society. As I doubt my own writings will soon be forgotten, I need not fear that those of my answerers will be remembered.

I am, dear sir,
Yours most sincerely.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, June 20, 1771.

I HAVE waited impatiently, my dear lord, for something worth putting into a letter; but trees do not speak in parliament, nor flowers write in the newspapers; and they are almost the only beings I have seen. I dined on Tuesday at Notting-hill[1] with the countesses of Powis and Holderness, lord and lady Pelham, and lord Frederic Cavendish — and Pam; and shall go to town on Friday to meet the same company at lady Hol-

---

1 The villa of lady Mary Coke near Kensington.

derness's; and this short journal comprises almost my whole history and knowledge.

I must now ask your lordship's and lady Strafford's commands for Paris. I shall set out on the seventh of next month. You will think, though you will not tell me so, that these are very juvenile jaunts at my age. Indeed I should be ashamed if I went for any other pleasure but that of once more seeing my dear blind friend,[2] whose much greater age forbids my depending on seeing her often. It will indeed be amusing to change the scene of politics; for though I have done with our own, one cannot help hearing them — nay reading them; for, like flies, they come to breakfast with one's bread and butter. I wish there was any other vehicle for them but a newspaper; a place into which, considering how they are exhausted, I am sure they have no pretensions. The duc d'Aiguillon I hear is minister. Their politics, some way or other, must end seriously, either in despotism, a civil war, or assassination. Methinks it is playing deep for the power of tyranny. C**** F**** is more moderate: he only games for an hundred thousand pounds that he has not.

Have you read the Life of Benvenuto Cellini, my lord? I am angry with him for being more

---

[2] Madame du Deffand.

distracted and wrong-headed than my lord Herbert. Till the revival of these two, I thought the present age had borne the palm of absurdity from all its predecessors. But I find our contemporaries are quiet good folks, that only game till they hang themselves, and do not kill every body they meet in the street. Who would have thought we were so reasonable?

Ranelagh, they tell me, is full of foreign dukes. There is a duc de la Tremouille, a duc d'Aremberg, and other grandees. I know the former, and am not sorry to be out of his way.

It is not pleasant to leave groves and lawns and rivers for a dirty town with a dirtier ditch, calling itself the Seine; but I dare not encounter the sea and bad inns in cold weather. This consideration will bring me back by the end of August. I should be happy to execute any commission for your lordship. You know how earnestly I wish always to show myself

Your lordship's
most faithful humble servant.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, June 22, 1771.

I JUST write you a line, dear sir, to acknowledge the receipt of the box of papers, which is come

very safe, and to give you a thousand thanks for the trouble you have taken. As you promise me another letter, I will wait to answer it.

At present I will only beg another favour, and with less shame, as it is of a kind you will like to grant. I have lately been at lord Ossory's at Ampthill. You know Catherine of Arragon lived some time there. Nothing remains of the castle, nor any marks of residence but a very small bit of her garden. I promised to lord Ossory to erect a cross to her memory on the spot, and he will. I wish therefore you could, from your collections of books, or memory, pick out an authentic form of a cross, of a better appearance than the common run. It must be raised on two or three steps, and if they were octagon, would it not be handsomer? Her arms must be hung like an Order upon it. Here is something of my idea.[1] The shield appendant to a collar. We will have some inscriptions to mark the cause of erection. Adieu.

Your most obliged.

---

[1] A rough sketch in the margin of the letter.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, June 24, 1771.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I wrote to you t'other day, I had not opened the box of letters, and consequently had not found yours, for which, and the prints, I give you a thousand thanks; though Count Bryan I have, and will return to you. Old Walker[1] is very like, and is valuable for being mentioned in the Dunciad, and a curiosity from being mentioned there without abuse.

Your notes are very judicious,[2] and your information most useful to me in drawing up some little preface to the Letters, which, however, I shall not have time now to do before my journey, as I shall set out on Sunday se'nnight. I like your motto much. The lady Cecilia's Letters are, as you say, more curious for the writer than the matter. We know very little of those daughters of Edward IV. Yet she and her sister Devonshire lived to be old; especially Cecily, who was married to lord Wells; and I have found why: he was first cousin to Henry VII., who, I suppose, thought it the safest match for her. I

---

[1] Dr. Walker, vice-master of Trinity College, by Lambourne.

[2] From king Edward's Journal relating to Mr. Fitzpatrick.

wish I knew all she and her sisters knew of their brothers, and their uncle Richard III.

Much good may it do my lord of Canterbury with his parboiled stag! Sure there must be more curiosities in Bennet library!

Though your letter is so entertaining and useful to me, the passage I like best is the promise of a visit you make me in the autumn with Mr. Essex. Pray put him in mind of it, as I shall you. It would add much to the obligation if you would bring two or three of your MSS. volumes of collections with you.

Adieu, dear sir,

Yours with the utmost gratitude.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Amiens, Tuesday evening, July 9, 1771.

I am got no farther yet, as I travel leisurely, and do not venture to fatigue myself. My voyage was but of four hours. I was sick only by choice and precaution, and find myself in perfect health. The enemy, I hope, has not returned to pinch you again, and that you defy the foul fiend. The weather is but lukewarm, and I should choose to have all the windows shut, if my smelling was not much more summerly than my feeling; but the frowsiness of obsolete tapestry and needle-work is

insupportable. Here are old fleas and bugs talking of Louis *quatorze* like tattered refugees in the Park, and they make poor Rosette attend to them whether she will or not. This is a woful account of an evening in July, and which monsieur de St. Lambert has omitted in his Seasons, though more natural than any thing he has placed there. If the Grecian religion had gone into the folly of self-mortification, I suppose the devotees of Flora would have shut themselves up in a nasty inn, and have punished their noses for the sensuality of having smelt to a rose or a honey-suckle. This is all I have yet to say; for I have had no adventure, no accident, nor seen a soul but my cousin R * * * W * * *, whom I met on the road and spoke to in his chaise. To-morrow I shall lie at Chantilly, and be at Paris early on Thursday. The C * * * are there already. Good night—and a *sweet* one to you!

Paris, Wednesday night, July 10.

I WAS so suffocated with my inn last night, that I mustered all my resolution, rose with the *alouette*, and was in my chaise by five o'clock this morning. I got hither by eight this evening, tired, but rejoiced, have had a comfortable dish of tea, and am going to bed in clean sheets. I sink myself even to my dear old woman and my sister; for it is impossible to sit down and be made charming

at this time of night after fifteen posts, and after having been here twenty times before.

At Chantilly I crossed on the countess of W * * *, who lies there to-night on her way to England. But I concluded she had no curiosity about me — and I could not brag of more about her — and so we had no intercourse.

I am woe-begone to find my lord F * * *. in the same hotel. He is as starched as an old-fashioned plaited neckcloth, and come to suck wisdom from this curious school of philosophy. He reveres me because I was acquainted with his father; and that does not at all increase my partiality to the son.

Luckily, the post departs early to-morrow morning. I thought you would like to hear I was arrived well. I should be happy to hear you are so; but do not torment yourself too soon, nor will I torment you. I have fixed the 26th of August for setting out on my return. These jaunts are too juvenile. I am ashamed to look back and remember in what year of Methuselah I was here first. Rosette sends her blessing to her daughter. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, July 30, 1771.

I DO not know where you are, nor where this will find you, nor when it will set out to seek you, as I am not certain by whom I shall send it. It is of little consequence, as I have nothing material to tell you, but what you probably may have heard.

The distress here is incredible, especially at court. The king's tradesmen are ruined, his servants starving, and even angels and archangels cannot get their pensions and salaries, but sing "Woe! woe! woe!" instead of Hosannahs. Compeigne is abandoned; Villiers-coterets and Chantilly[1] crowded, and Chanteloup[2] still more in fashion, whither every body goes that pleases; though, when they ask leave, the answer is, *Je ne le défends ni le permets.* This is the first time that ever the will of a king of France was interpreted against his inclination. Yet, after annihilating his parliament, and ruining public credit, the

---

[1] The country palaces of the duke of Orleans and the prince of Condé, who were in disgrace at court for having espoused the cause of the parliament of Paris banished by the chancellor Maupou.

[2] The country seat of the duc de Choiseul, to which, on his ceasing to be first minister, he was banished by the king.

tamely submits to be affronted by his own servants. Mad. de Beauveau and two or three high-spirited dames defy this czar of Gaul. Yet they and their cabal are as inconsistent on the other hand. They make epigrams, sing vaudevilles against the mistress, hand about libels against the chancellor, and have no more effect than a sky-rocket; but in three months will die to go to court, and to be invited to sup with madame du Barry. The only real struggle is between the chancellor[3] and the duc d'Aiguillon. The first is false, bold, determined, and not subject to little qualms. The other is less known, communicates himself to nobody, is suspected of deep policy and deep designs, but seems to intend to set out under a mask of very smooth varnish; for he has just obtained the payment of all his bitter enemy la Chalotai's pensions and arrears. He has the advantage too of being but moderately detested in comparison of his rival, and, what he values more, the interest of the mistress.[4] The comptroller-general[5] serves both, by acting mischief more sensibly felt; for he ruins every body but those who purchase a respite from his mistress. He dispenses bankruptcy by retail, and will fall, because he cannot even by these means be useful

3 Maupou.

4 Madame du Barry.

5 The abbé Terrai.

enough. They are striking off nine millions from *la caisse militaire*, five from the marine, and one from the *affaires étrangeres:* yet all this will not extricate them. You never saw a great nation in so disgraceful a position. Their next prospect is not better: it rests on an *imbecille*, both in mind and body.

July 31.

Mr. Churchill and my sister set out to-night after supper, and I shall send this letter by them. There are no new books, no new plays, no new novels; nay, no new fashions. They have dragged old mademoiselle le Maure out of a retreat of thirty years, to sing at the Colisée, which is a most gaudy Ranelagh, gilt, painted, and becupided like an opera, but not calculated to last as long as Mother Coliseum, being composed of chalk and pasteboard. Round it are courts of *treillage*, that serve for nothing, and behind it a canal, very like a horse-pond, on which there are fireworks and justs. All together it is very pretty; but as there are few nabobs and nabobesses in this country, and as the middling and common people are not much richer than Job when he had lost every thing but his patience, the proprietors are on the point of being ruined, unless the project takes place that is talked of. It is, to oblige Corneille, Racine, and Moliere to hold their tongues twice a-week, that their audiences may go to the

Colisée. This is like our parliament's adjourning when senators want to go to Newmarket. There is a monsieur Guillard writing a "History of the Rivalité de la France et de l'Angleterre." — I hope he will not omit this parallel.

The instance of their poverty that strikes *me* most, who make political observations by the thermometer of baubles, is, that there is nothing new in their shops. I know the faces of every snuff-box and every tea-cup as well as those of madame du Lac and monsieur Poirier. I have chosen some cups and saucers for my lady Ailesbury, as she ordered me, but I cannot say they are at all extraordinary. I have bespoken two cabriolets for her, instead of six, because I think them very dear, and that she may have four more if she likes them. I shall bring too a sample of a *baguette* that suits them. For myself, between economy and the want of novelty, I have not laid out five guineas — a very memorable anecdote in the history of my life. Indeed, the czarina and I have a little dispute: she has offered to purchase the whole Crozat collection of pictures, at which I had intended to ruin myself. The Turks take her for it! — *A-propos*, they are sending from hence fourscore officers to Poland, each of whom I suppose, like Almanzor, can stamp with his foot and raise an army.

As my sister travels like a Tartar princess with her whole horde, she will arrive too late almost

for me to hear from you in return to this letter, which in truth requires no answer, *vû que* I shall set out myself on the 26th of August. You will not imagine that I am glad to save myself the pleasure of hearing from you, but I would not give you the trouble of writing unnecessarily. If you are at home, and not in Scotland, you will judge by these dates where to find me. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. Instead of restoring the Jesuits, they are proceeding to annihilate the Celestine, Augustines, and some other orders.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Paris, August 5, 1771.

It is a great satisfaction to me to find by your letter of the 30th that you have had no return of your gout. I have been assured here that the best remedy is to cut one's nails in hot water.—It is, I fear, as certain as any other remedy! It would at least be so here, if their bodies were of a piece with their understandings; or if both were as curable, as they are the contrary. Your prophecy, I doubt, is not better founded than the prescription. I may be lame; but I shall never be a duck, nor deal in the garbage of the alley.

I envy your *Strawberry tide*, and need not say how much I wish I was there to receive you. Methinks I should be as glad of a little grass, as a seaman after a long voyage. Yet English gardening gains ground here prodigiously—not much at a time indeed—I have literally seen one that is exactly like a tailor's paper of patterns. There is a monsieur Boutin, who has tacked a piece of what he calls an English garden to a set of stone terrasses with steps of turf. There are three or four very high hills, almost as high as, and exactly in the shape of, a tansy pudding. You squeeze between these and a river, that is conducted at obtuse angles in a stone channel, and supplied by a pump; and when walnuts come in, I suppose it will be navigable. In a corner enclosed by a chalk wall are the samples I mentioned: there is a stripe of grass, another of corn, and a third *en friche*, exactly in the order of beds in a nursery. They have translated Mr. Whateley's book, and the lord knows what barbarism is going to be laid at our door. This new *Anglomanie* will literally be *mad English.*

New *arrêts*, new retrenchments, new misery, stalk forth every day. The parliament of Besançon is dissolved; so are the *grenadiers de France.* The king's tradesmen are all bankrupt, no pensions are paid, and every body is reforming their suppers and equipages. Despotism makes converts faster than ever Christianity did. Louis

quinze is the true *rex christianissimus*, and has ten times more success than his dragooning great grandfather. Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours most faithfully.

Friday 9th.

THIS was to have gone by a private hand, but cannot depart till Monday; so I may be continuing my letter till I bring it myself. I have been again at the Chartreuse; and though it was the sixth time, I am more enchanted with those paintings[1] than ever. If it is not the first work in the world, and must yield to the Vatican, yet in simplicity and harmony it beats Raphael himself. There is a vapour over all the pictures that makes them more natural than any representation of objects—I cannot conceive how it is effected! you see them through the shine of a south-east wind. These poor folks do not know the inestimable treasure they possess—but they are perishing these pictures, and one gazes at them as at a setting sun. There is the purity of Racine in them, but they give me more pleasure—and I should much sooner be tired of the poet than of the painter.

It is very singular that I have not half the sa-

---

[1] The life of St. Bruno, painted by Le Sœur, in the cloister of the Chartreuse at Paris.

tisfaction in going into churches and convents that I used to have. The consciousness that the vision is dispelled, the want of fervour so obvious in the religious, the solitude that one knows proceeds from contempt, not from contemplation, make those places appear like abandoned theatres destined to destruction. The monks trot about as if they had not long to stay there; and what used to be holy gloom is now but dirt and darkness. There is no more deception, than in a tragedy acted by candle-snuffers. One is sorry to think that an empire of common sense would not be very picturesque; for, as there is nothing but taste that can compensate for the imagination of madness, I doubt there will never be twenty men of taste for twenty thousand madmen. The world will no more see Athens, Rome, and the Medici again, than a succession of five good emperors, like Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines.

August 13.

Mr. Edmonson has called on me; and as he sets out to-morrow, I can safely trust my letter to him.

I have, I own, been much shocked at reading Gray's[2] death in the papers. 'Tis an hour that

[2] The poet.

makes one forget any subjects of complaint, especially towards one with whom I lived in friendship from thirteen years old. As self lies so rooted in self, no doubt the nearness of our ages made the stroke recoil to my own breast; and having so little expected his death, it is plain how little I expect my own. Yet to you, who of all men living are the most forgiving, I need not excuse the concern I feel. I fear, most men ought to apologize for their want of feeling, instead of palliating that sensation when they have it. I thought that what I had seen of the world had hardened my heart; but I find it had formed my language, not extinguished my tenderness. In short, I am really shocked — nay, I am hurt at my own weakness, as I perceive that when I love any body, it is for my life; and I have had too much reason not to wish that such a disposition may very seldom be put to the trial. You at least are the only person to whom I would venture to make such a confession.

Adieu, my dear sir! — Let me know when I arrive, which will be about the last day of the month, when I am likely to see you. I have much to say to you. Of being here I am most heartily tired, and nothing but this dear old woman should keep me here an hour — I am weary of them to death — but that is not new!

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Paris, August 11, 1771.

You will have seen, I hope, before now, that I have not neglected writing to you. I sent you a letter by my sister, but doubt she has been a great while upon the road, as they travel with a large family. I was not sure where you was, and would not write at random by the post.

I was just going out when I received yours and the newspapers. I was struck in a most sensible manner, when, after reading your letter, I saw in the newspapers that Gray is dead! So very ancient an intimacy, and, I suppose, the natural reflection to self on losing a person but a year older, made me absolutely start in my chair. It seemed more a corporal than a mental blow; and yet I am exceedingly concerned for him, and every body must be so for the loss of such a genius. He called on me but two or three days before I came hither; he complained of being ill, and talked of the gout in his stomach — but I expected his death no more than my own—and yet the same death will probably be mine.—I am full of all these reflections — but shall not attrist you with them: — only do not wonder that my letter will be short, when my mind is full of what I do not give vent to. It was but last night that I was thinking how few persons last, if one lives to be

old, to whom one can talk without reserve. It is impossible to be intimate with the young, because they and the old cannot converse on the same common topics; and of the old that survive, there are few one can commence a friendship with, because one has probably all one's life despised their hearts or their understandings. These are the steps through which one passes to the unenviable lees of life!

I am very sorry for the state of poor lady B * * *. It presages ill. She had a prospect of long happiness. Opium is a very false friend.

I will get you Bougainville's book. — I think it is on the Falkland Isles, for it cannot be on those just discovered; but as I set out to-morrow se'nnight, and probably may have no opportunity sooner of sending it, I will bring it myself. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Paris, August 12, 1771.

Dear Sir,

I am excessively shocked at reading in the papers that Mr. Gray is dead! I wish to God you may be able to tell me it is not true! Yet in this painful uncertainty I must rest some days! None of my acquaintance are in London — I do not know to

whom to apply but to you — alas! I fear in vain! Too many circumstances speak it true! — the detail is exact; — a second paper arrived by the same post, and does not contradict it — and, what is worse, I saw him but four or five days before I came hither; he had been to Kensington for the air, complained of the gout flying about him, of sensations of it in his stomach; I indeed thought him changed, and that he looked ill — still I had not the least idea of his being in danger — I started up from my chair when I read the paragraph — a cannon ball would not have surprised me more! The shock but ceased to give way to my concern, and my hopes are too ill-founded to mitigate it! If nobody has the charity to write to me, my anxiety must continue till the end of the month, for I shall set out on my return on the 26th, and unless you receive this time enough for your answer to leave London on the 20th, in the evening, I cannot meet it till I find it in Arlington-street, whither I beg you to direct it.

If the event is but too true, pray add to this melancholy service that of telling me any circumstances you know of his death. Our long, very long, friendship, and his genius, must endear to me every thing that relates to him. What writings has he left? Who are his executors? I should earnestly wish, if he has destined any thing to the public, to print it at my press — it would do me honour, and would give me an opportunity of

expressing what I feel for him. Methinks, as we grow old, our only business here is to adorn the graves of our friends or to dig our own! Adieu, dear, sir,

Yours ever.

P. S. I heard this unhappy news but last night; and have just been told that lord Edward Bentick goes in haste to-morrow to England, so that you will receive this much sooner than I expected: still I must desire you to direct to Arlington-street, as by the surest conveyance to me.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Paris, August 25, 1771.

I HAVE passed my biennial six weeks here, my dear lord, and am preparing to return as soon as the weather will allow me. It is some comfort to the patriot virtue, envy, to find this climate worse than our own. There were four very hot days at the end of last month, which you know with us northern people compose a summer: it has rained half this, and for these three days there has been a deluge, a storm, and extreme cold. Yet these folks shiver in silk, and sit with their windows open till supper-time.—Indeed, firing is very dear, and nabobs very scarce. Economy and retrenchment

are the words in fashion, and are founded in a little more than caprice. I have heard no instance of luxury but in mademoiselle Guimard, a favourite dancer, who is building a palace: round the *sale à manger* there are windows that open upon hot-houses, that are to produce flowers all winter. —That is worthy of * * *. * * *. There is a finer dancer, whom Mr. H * * * * is to transplant to London; a mademoiselle Heinel or Ingle, a Fleming. She is tall, perfectly made, very handsome, and has a set of attitudes copied from the classics. She moves as gracefully slow as Pygmalion's statue when it was coming to life, and moves her leg round as imperceptibly as if she was dancing in the zodiac.—But she is not Virgo.

They make no more of breaking parliaments here than an English mob does of breaking windows. It is pity people are so ill-sorted. If this king and ours could cross over and figure in, Louis XV. would dissolve our parliament if Polly Jones did but say a word to him. They have got into such a habit of it here, that you would think a parliament was a polypus; they cut it in two, and by next morning half of it becomes a whole assembly. This has literally been the case at Besançon. Lord and lady Barrymore, who are in the highest favour at Compiegne, will be able to carry over the receipt.

Every body feels in their own way. My grief is to see the ruinous condition of the palaces and pictures. I was yesterday at the Louvre. Le

Brun's noble gallery, where the battles of Alexander are, and of which he designed the ceiling, and even the shutters, bolts, and locks, is in a worse condition than the old gallery at Somerset-house. It rains in upon the pictures, though there are stores of much more valuable pieces than those of Le Brun. Heaps of glorious works by Raphael and all the great masters are piled up and equally neglected at Versailles. Their care is not less destructive in private houses. The duke of Orleans' pictures and the prince of Monaco's have been cleaned, and varnished so thick that you may see your face in them; and some of them have been transported from board to cloth, bit by bit, and the seams filled up with colour; so that in ten years they will not be worth sixpence. It makes me as peevish as if I was posterity! I hope your lordship's works will last longer than these of Louis XIV. The glories of his *siecle* hasten fast to their end, and little will remain but those of his authors.

I am, my dear lord,

Your most faithful humble servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Sept. 7, 1771.

I ARRIVED yesterday within an hour or two after you was gone, which mortified me exceedingly:

lord knows when I shall see you. You are so active and so busy, and cast bullets and build bridges, are pontifex maximus, and, like sir John Thorold or Cimon,

——— triumph over land and wave,

that one can never get a word with you. Yet I am very well worth a general's or a politician's ear. I have been deep in all the secrets of France, and confidant of some of the principals of both parties. I know what is, and is to be, though I am neither priest nor conjurer—and have heard a vast deal about breaking carabiniers and grenadiers; though, as usual, I dare to say I shall give a woful account of both. The worst part is, that by the most horrid oppression and injustice their finances will very soon be in good order—unless some bankrupt turns Ravaillac, which will not surprise me. The horror the nation has conceived of the king and chancellor, makes it probable that the latter, at least, will be sacrificed. He seems not to be without apprehension, and has removed from the king's library a MS. trial of a chancellor who was condemned to be hanged under Charles VII.—For the king, *qui a fait ses épreuves*, and not to his honour, you will not wonder that he lives in terrors.

I have executed all lady Ailesbury's commissions; but mind, I do not commission you to tell her, for you would certainly forget it.

As you will no doubt come to town to report

who burnt Portsmouth, I will meet you here, if I am apprised of the day. Your niece's marriage[1] pleases me extremely. Though I never saw him till last night, I know a great deal of her futur, and like his character. His person is much better than I expected, and far preferable to many of the fine young moderns. He is better than sir * * *, at least as well as the duke of * * * * *, and Adonis compared to the charming Mr. * * * * *. Adieu!

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 10, 1771.

However melancholy the occasion is, I can but give you a thousand thanks, dear sir, for the kind trouble you have taken, and the information you have given me about poor Mr. Gray. I received your first letter at Paris; the last I found at my house in town, where I arrived only on Friday last. The circumstance of the professor refusing to rise in the night and visit him, adds to the shock. Who is that true professor of physic? Jesus! is their absence to murder as well as their presence?

I have not heard from Mr. Mason, but I have

---

1 The marriage of lady Gertrude Seymour Conway to lord Villiers, afterwards earl of Grandison.

written to him. Be so good as to tell the master at Pembroke, though I have not the honour of knowing him, how sensible I am of his proposed attention to me, and how much I feel for him in losing a friend of so excellent a genius. Nothing will allay my own concern like seeing any of his compositions that I have not yet seen. It is buying even them too dear—but when the author is irreparably lost, the produce of his mind is the next best possession. I have offered my press to Mr. Mason, and hope it will be accepted.

Many thanks for the cross, dear sir; it is precisely what I wished. I hope you and Mr. Essex preserve your resolution of passing a few days here between this and Christmas. Just at present I am not my own master, having stepped into the middle of a sudden match in my own family. Lord Hertford is going to marry his third daughter to lord Villiers, son of lady Grandison, the present wife of sir Charles Montagu. We are all felicity, and in a round of dinners—I am this minute returned from Beaumont-lodge at old Windsor, where sir *Charles Grandison* lives. I will let you know, if the papers do not, when our festivities are subsided.

I shall receive with gratitude from Mr. Tyson either drawing or etching of our departed friend, but wish not to have it inscribed to me, as it is an honour more justly due to Mr. Stonehewer. If the master of Pembroke will accept a copy of a

small picture I have of Mr. Gray, painted soon after the publication of the Ode on Eton, it shall be at his service—and after his death I will beg it may be bequeathed to his college.

Adieu, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 12, 1771.

Dear Sir,

As our wedding will not be so soon as I expected, and as I should be unwilling you should take a journey in bad weather, I wish it may be convenient to you and Mr. Essex to come hither on the 25th day of this present month. If one can depend on any season, it is on the *chill suns* of October, which, like an elderly beauty, are less capricious than spring or summer. Our old-fashioned October, you know, reached eleven days into modern November and I still depend on that reckoning, when I have a mind to protract the year.

Lord Ossory is charmed with Mr. Essex's cross,[1] and wishes much to consult him on the proportions.

---

[1] Mr. Cole had applied to Mr. Essex, who furnished a design for the cross, which was followed.

Lord Ossory has taken a small house very near mine, is now, and will be here again, after Newmarket. He is determined to erect it at Ampthill, and I have written the following lines to record the reason.

In days of old here Ampthill's towers were seen,
The mournful refuge of an injured queen.
Here flow'd her pure, but unavailing tears;
Here blinded zeal sustain'd her sinking years.
Yet freedom hence her radiant banners waved,
And love avenged a realm by priests enslaved.
From Catherine's wrongs a nation's bliss was spread,
And Luther's light from Henry's lawless bed.

I hope the satire on Henry VIII. will make you excuse the compliment to Luther, which, like most poetic compliments, does not come from my heart. I only like him better than Henry, Calvin, and the church of Rome, who were bloody persecutors. Calvin was an execrable villain, and the worst of all; for he copied those whom he pretended to correct. Luther was as jovial as Wilkes, and served the cause of liberty without canting.

Yours most sincerely.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill; Oct. 23, 1771.

I am sorry, dear sir, that I cannot say your answer is as agreeable and entertaining as you flatter me my letter was; but consider, you are prevented coming to me, and have flying pains of rheumatism — either were sufficient to spoil your letter.

I am sure of being here till to-morrow se'nnight, the last of this month; consequently I may hope to see Mr. Essex here on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday next. After that I cannot answer for myself on account of our wedding, which depends on the return of a courier from Ireland. If I can command any days certain in November, I will give you notice; and yet I shall have a scruple of dragging you so far from home at such a season. I will leave it to your option, only begging you to be assured that I shall always be most happy to see you.

I am making a very curious purchase at Paris, the complete armour of Francis the first. It is gilt in relief, and is very rich and beautiful. It comes out of the Crozat collection. I am building a small chapel too in my garden, to receive two valuable pieces of antiquity, and which have been presents singularly lucky for me. They are the window from Bexhill, with the portraits of Henry III. and his queen, procured for me by lord Ashburnham. The

other, great part of the tomb of Capoccio, mentioned in my Anecdotes of Painting on the subject of the confessor's shrine, and sent to me from Rome by Mr. Hamilton, our minister at Naples. It is very extraordinary that I should happen to be master of these curiosities. After next summer, by which time my castle and collection will be complete (for if I buy more, I must build another castle for another collection), I propose to form another catalogue and description, and shall take the liberty to call on you for your assistance. In the mean time there is enough new to divert you at present.

I am, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Late Strawberry-hill, January 7, 1772.

You have read of my calamity without knowing it, and will pity me when you do. I have been blown up; my castle is blown up; Guy Fawkes has been about my house; and the fifth of November has fallen on the 6th of January! In short, nine thousand powder-mills broke loose yesterday morning on Hounslow-heath; a whole squadron of them came hither, and have broken eight of my painted-glass windows; and the north side of

the castle looks as if it had stood a siege. The two saints in the hall have suffered martyrdom! they have had their bodies cut off, and nothing remains but their heads. The two next great sufferers are indeed two of the least valuable, being the passage windows to the library and great parlour—a fine pane is demolished in the round room; and the window by the gallery is damaged. Those in the cabinet and Holbein-room, and gallery, and blue-room, and green-closet, &c. have escaped. As the storm came from the north-west, the china-closet was not touched, nor a cup fell down. The bow-window of brave old coloured glass, at Mr. Hindley's, is massacred; and all the north sides of Twickenham and Brentford are shattered. At London it was proclaimed an earthquake, and half the inhabitants ran into the street.

As lieutenant-general of the ordnance, I must beseech you to give strict orders that no more powder-mills may blow up. My aunt, Mrs. Kerwood, reading one day in the papers that a distiller's had been burnt by the head of the still flying off, said, she wondered they did not make an act of parliament against the heads of stills flying off. Now, I hold it much easier for you to do a body this service; and would recommend to your consideration, whether it would not be prudent to have all magazines of powder kept under water till they are wanted for service. In the

mean time, I expect a pension to make me amends for what I have suffered under the government. Adieu!

Yours, all that remains of me.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, Jan. 28, 1772.

IT is long indeed, dear sir, since we corresponded. I should not have been silent if I had had any thing worth telling you in your way—but I grow such an antiquity myself, that I think I am less fond of what remains of our predecessors.

I thank you for Bannerman's proposal; I mean, for taking the trouble to send it, for I am not at all disposed to subscribe. I thank you more for the note on king Edward; I mean, too, for your friendship in thinking of me. Of dean Milles I cannot trouble myself to think any more. His piece is at Strawberry: perhaps I may look at it for the sake of your note. The bad weather keeps me in town, and a good deal at home, which I find very comfortable, literally practising what so many persons pretend they intend, being quiet and enjoying my fire-side in my elderly days.

Mr. Mason has shewn me the relics of poor Mr. Gray. I am sadly disappointed at finding them so very inconsiderable. He always per-

sisted, when I inquired about his writings, that he had nothing by him. I own I doubted. I am grieved he was so very near exact—I speak of my own satisfaction; as to his genius, what he published during his life will establish his fame as long as our language lasts, and there is a man of genius left. There is a silly fellow, I do not know who, that has published a volume of letters on the English nation, with characters of our modern authors. He has talked such nonsense on Mr. Gray, that I have no patience with the compliments he has paid me. He must have an excellent taste! and gives me a woful opinion of my own trifles, when he likes them, and cannot see the beauties of a poet that ought to be ranked in the first line.

I am more humbled by any applause in the present age, than by hosts of such critics as dean Milles. Is not Garrick reckoned a tolerable author, though he has proved how little sense is necessary to form a great actor? His Cymon, his prologues, and epilogues, and forty such pieces of trash are below mediocrity, and yet delight the mob in the boxes as well as in the footman's gallery. I do not mention the things written in his praise, because he writes most of them himself. But you know any one popular merit can confer all merit. Two women talking of Wilkes, one said he squinted—t'other replied "Squints!—well, if he does, it is not more than

a man should squint." For my part I can see how extremely well Garrick acts, without thinking him six feet high. It is said Shakespeare was a bad actor; why do not his divine plays make our wise judges conclude that he was a good one? they have not a proof of the contrary, as they have in Garrick's works — but what is it to you or me what he is? We may see him act with pleasure, and nothing obliges us to read his writings.

Adieu, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, June 9, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

THE preceding paper[1] was given me by a gentleman, who has a better opinion of my bookhood than I deserve. I could give him no satisfaction, but told him, I would get inquiry made at Cambridge for the pieces he wants. If you can give me any assistance in this chace, I am sure you will: as it will be trouble enough, I will not make my letter longer.

Yours ever.

---

[1] This letter enclosed some queries from a gentleman abroad, respecting books, &c. relating to the order of Malta.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, June 17, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

YOU are a mine that answers beyond those of Peru. I have given the treasures you sent me to the gentleman from whom I had the queries. He is vastly obliged to you, and I am sure so am I for the trouble you have given yourself, and therefore I am going to give you more. King Edward's Letters are printed. Shall I keep them for you or send them, and how? I intend you four copies—shall you want more? Lord Ossory takes an hundred, and I have as many; but none will be sold.

I am out of materials for my press. I am thinking of printing some numbers of miscellaneous MSS. from my own and Mr. Gray's collection. If you have any among your stories that are historic, new, and curious, and like to have them printed, I shall be glad of them. Among Gray's are letters of sir Thomas Wyat the elder. I am sure you must have a thousand hints about him. If you will send them to me, I will do you justice, as you will see I have in King Edward's Letters. Do you know any thing of his son, the insurgent, in queen Mary's reign?

I do not know whether it was not to Payne the bookseller, but I am sure I gave somebody a very

few notes to the British Topography. They were indeed of very little consequence.

I have got to-day, and am reading with entertainment, two vols. in 8vo. the lives of Leland, Hearne, and Antony Wood. I do not know the author, but he is of Oxford. I think you should add that of your friend Brown Willis. There is a queer piece on Free-masonry in one of the volumes, said to be written, on very slender authority, by Henry VI. with notes by Mr. Locke: a very odd conjunction!—It says that Arts were brought from the East by Peter Gower. As I am sure you will not find an account of this singular person in all your collections, be it known to you, that Peter Gower was commonly called Pythagoras. I remember our newspapers insisting, that Thomas Kouli Kan was an Irishman, and that his true name was Thomas Callaghan.

On reading over my letter, I find I am no sceptic, having affirmed no less than four times, that I *am sure*. Though this is extremely awkward, I *am sure* I will not write my letter over again; so pray excuse or burn my tautology.

Yours ever.

P. S. I had like to have forgotten the most obliging, and to me the most interesting part of your letter—your kind offer of coming hither. I accept it most gladly; but, for reasons I will tell

you, wish it may be deferred a little. I am going to Park-place (general Conway's), then to Ampthill (lord Ossory's), and then to Goodwood (duke of Richmond's,) and the beginning of August to Wentworth-castle (marquis of Rockingham's), so that I shall not be at all settled here till the end of the latter month. But I have a stronger reason. By that time will be finished a delightful chapel I am building in my garden, to contain the shrine of Capoccio, and the window with Henry III. and his queen. My new bed-chamber will be finished too, which is now all in litter: and, besides, September is a quiet month; visits to make or receive are over, and the troublesome go to shoot partridges. If that time suits you, pray assure me I shall see you on the first of September.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Monday, June 22, 1772.

IT is lucky that I have had no dealings with Mr. F * * *; for, if he had ruined me, as he has half the world, I could not have *run* away. I tired myself with walking on Friday; the gout came on Saturday in my foot; yesterday, I kept my bed till four o'clock, and my room all day — but, with wrapping myself all over with bootikins, I

have scarce had any pain — my foot swelled immediately, and to-day I am descended into the blueth and greenth;[1] and though you expect to find that I am paving the way to an excuse, I think I shall be able to be with you on Saturday. All I intend to excuse myself from, is walking. I should certainly never have the gout, if I had lost the use of my feet. Cherubims that have no legs, and do nothing but stick their chins in a cloud and sing, are never out of order. Exercise is the worst thing in the world, and as bad an invention as gun-powder.

A propos to Mr. F * * *, here is a passage ridiculously applicable to him, that I met with yesterday in the letters of Guy Patin: "Il n'y a pas long tems qu'un auditeur des comptes nommé Mons. Nivelle fit banqueroute; et tout fraichement, c'est-à-dire depuis trois jours, un tresorier des parties casuelles, nommé Sanson, en a fait autant; et pour vous montrer, qu'il est vrai que *res humanæ faciunt circulum*, comme il a été autrefois dit par Plato et par Aristote, celui-là s'en retourne d'où il vient. Il est fils d'un paisan; il a été laquais de son premier metier, et aujourd'hui il n'est plus rien, si non qu'il lui reste une assez belle femme."——I do not think I can find in Patin or Plato, nay, nor in Aristotle, though he wrote about every thing,

1 Cant words of Mr. Walpole's for blue and green.

a parallel case to * * * * * *'s: there are advertised to be sold more annuities of his and his society, to the amount of five hundred thousand pounds a year! I wonder what he will do next, when he has sold the estates of all his friends!

I have been reading the most delightful book in the world, the lives of Leland, Tom Hearne, and Antony Wood. The last's diary makes a thick volume in octavo. One entry is, "This day Old Joan began to make my bed." In the story of Leland is an examination of a free-mason, written by the hand of king Henry VI. with notes by Mr. Locke. Free-masonry, Henry VI. and Locke, make a strange heterogeneous olio; but that is not all. The respondent, who defends the mystery of masonry, says it was brought into Europe by the Venetians—he means the Phœnicians—And who do you think propagated it? Why, one Peter Gore—And who do you think that was?—One Pythagoras, Pythagore.—I do not know whether it is not still more extraordinary, that this and the rest of the nonsense in that account made Mr. Locke determine to be a free-mason: so would I too, if I could expect to hear of more *Peter Gores.*

Pray tell lady Lyttelton that I say she will certainly kill herself if she lets lady Ailesbury drag her twice a day to feed the pheasants; and you make her climb cliffs and clamber over mountains. She has a tractability that alarms me for her; and

if she does not pluck up a spirit and determine never to be put out of her own way, I do not know what may be the consequence. I will come and set her an example of immoveability. Take notice, I do not say one civil syllable to lady Ailesbury. She has not passed a whole day here these two years. She is always very gracious, says she will come when *you* will fix a time, as if *you* governed, and then puts it off whenever it is proposed, nor will spare one single day from Park-place—as if other people were not as partial to their own Park-places! Adieu!

Yours ever.

Tuesday noon.

I WROTE my letter last night; this morning I received yours, and shall wait till Sunday, as you bid me, which will be more convenient for my gout, though not for other engagements;* but I shall obey the superior, as *nullum tempus occurrit regi et podagræ.*

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

June 28, 1774.

DEAR SIR,

As I am getting into my chaise I received your packet, for which I have only time to give you a

thousand thanks. I have sent you six copies,[1] and have left orders for Dr. Glynn and his friends to see my house; but I fear it will be to great disadvantage; for my housekeeper is very ill, and there will only be a maid that can tell them nothing.

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, July 7, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

I SENT you last week by the Cambridge Fly, that puts up in Gray's-inn-lane, six copies of King Edward's Letters, but fear I forgot to direct their being left at Mr. Bentham's, by which neglect perhaps you have not yet got them; so that I have been very blameable, while I thought I was very expeditious; and it was not till reading your letter again just now that I discovered my carelessness.

I have not heard of Dr. Glynn, &c. but the housekeeper has orders to receive them. I thank you a thousand times for the Maltese notes, which I have given to the gentleman, and for

---

[1] Of King Edward's Letters.

the Wyattiana: I am going to work on the latter.

I have not yet seen Mr. Gray's print, but am glad it is so like. I expected Mr. Mason would have sent me one easily, but I suppose he keeps it for me, as I shall call on him in my way to lord Strafford's.

Mr. West, one of our brother antiquaries, is dead. He had a very curious collection of old pictures, English coins, English prints, and manuscripts. But he was so rich, that I take for granted nothing will be sold. I could wish for his family pictures of Henry V. and Henry VIII.

Foote, in his new comedy of the Nabob, has lashed master doctor Milles, and our Society, very deservedly for the nonsensical discussion they had this winter about Whittington and his cat. Few of them are fit for any thing better than such researches.

Poor Mr. Granger has been very ill, but is almost recovered. I intend to invite him to meet you in September. It is a party I shall be very impatient for: you know how sincerely I am,

Dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient humble servant.

P. S. Pray tell me who the Cardinal was, whose lectures Ant. Wood says sir T. Wyat went to Oxford to hear. In my edition the column is 56,

not 51, as in your letter. I have not Hearne's Langtoft: if there is any fact in Hearne's notes relating to sir Thomas, be so good as to transcribe it.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, July 28, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

I AM anew obliged to you, as I am perpetually, for the notice you give me of another intended publication against me in the Archæologia, or Old Woman's Logic. By your account the author will add much credit to their Society! For my part I shall take no notice of any of his *handycrafts*. However, as there seems to be a willingness to carp at me, and as gnats may on a sudden provoke one to give a slap, I choose to be at liberty to say what I think of the learned Society; and therefore I have taken leave of them, having so good an occasion presented as their council on Whittington and his cat, and the ridicule that Foote has thrown on them. They are welcome to say any thing on my writings, but that they are the works of a fellow of so foolish a Society.

I am at work on the life of sir Thomas Wyat, but it does not please me; nor will be entertaining, though you have contributed so many materials towards it. You must take one trouble more:—

it is to inquire and search for a book that I want to see. It is the Pilgrim; was written by William Thomas, who was executed in queen Mary's time; but the book was printed under, and dedicated to Edward VI. I have only an imperfect memorandum of it, and cannot possibly recal to mind from whence I made it. All I think I remember, is, that the book was in the king's library. I have sent to the Museum to inquire after it; but I cannot find it mentioned in Ames's History of English Printers. Be so good to ask all your antiquarian friends if they know such a work.

Amidst all your kindness, you have added one very disagreeable paragraph:—I mean, you doubt about coming here in September. Fear of a sore throat would be a reason for your never coming. It is one of the distempers in the world the least to be foreseen, and September, a dry month, one of the least likely months to bring it. I do not like your recurring to so very ill-founded an excuse, and positively will not accept it, unless you wish I should not be so much as I am,

Dear sir,

Your most faithful humble servant.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, August 25, 1772.

Dear Sir,

I thank you for your notices, dear sir, and will deliver you from the trouble of any further pursuit of the Peleryne of Thomas. I have discovered him among the Cottonian MSS. in the Museum, and am to see him.

If Dr. Browne is returned to Cambridge, may I beg you to give him a thousand thanks for a present he left for me at my house, a goar stone, and a seal, that belonged to Mr. Gray. I shall lay them up in my cabinet at Strawberry among my most valuables. Dr. Browne, however, was not quite kind to me; for he left no direction where to find him in town, so that I could not wait upon him, nor invite him to Strawberry-hill, as I much wished to do.

Do not these words, *invite him to Strawberry*, make your ears tingle? September is at hand, and you must have no sore throat. The new chapel in the garden is almost finished, and you must come to the dedication.

I have seen Lincoln and York; and, to say the truth, prefer the former in some respects. In truth I was scandalized in the latter. William of Hatfield's tomb and figure is thrown aside into a hole; and yet the chapter possess an estate that his mo-

ther gave them. I have charged Mr. Mason with my anathema, unless they do justice. I saw Roche abbey too, which is hid in such a venerable chasm, that you might lie concealed there even from a squire parson of the parish. Lord Scarborough, to whom it belongs, and who lives at next door, neglects it as much as if he was afraid of ghosts. I believe Montesino's cave lay in just such a solemn thicket, which is now so over-grown, that when one finds the spot, one can scarce find the ruins.

I forgot to tell you, that in the screen of York Minster, there are most curious statues of the kings of England, from the Conqueror to Henry VI. very singular, evidently by two different hands, the one better than the other, and most of them, I am persuaded, very authentic. Richard II. Henry III. and Henry V. I am sure are; and Henry IV. though unlike the common portrait at Hampton-court in Herefordshire, the most singular and villanous countenance I ever saw. I intend to try to get them well engraved. That old fool James I. is crowded in, in the place of Henry VI. that was taken away to make room for this piece of flattery. For the chapter did not slight live princes.

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 28, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR repentance is much more agreeable than your sin, and will cancel it whenever you please. Still I have a fellow-feeling for the indolence of age, and have myself been writing an excuse this instant for not accepting an invitation above three-score miles off. One's limbs, when they grow old, will not go any where, when they do not like it. If yours should find themselves in a more pliant humour, you are always sure of being welcome here, let the fit of motion come when it will.

Pray what is become of that figure you mention of Henry VII. which the destroyers, not the builders, have rejected? and which the antiquaries, who know a man by his crown better than by his face, have rejected likewise? The latter put me in mind of characters in comedies, in which a woman disguised in a man's habit, and whose features her very lover does not know, is immediately acknowledged by pulling off her hat, and letting down her hair, which her lover had never seen before. I should be glad to ask Dr. Milles, If he thinks the crown of England was always made, like a quart-pot, by Winchester measure? If Mr. Tyson has made a print from that little statue, I trust he will give me one; and if he, or Mr. Essex, or both, will accompany you hither, I shall be glad to see them.

At Buckden, in the bishop's palace, I saw a print of Mrs. Newcome: I suppose the late mistress of St. John's. Can you tell me where I can procure one? Mind I insist that you do not serve me, as you have often done, and send me your own, if you have one. I seriously will not accept it, nor ever trust you again.

On the stair-case in the same palace there is a picture of two young men, in the manner of Vandyck, not at all ill done: do you know who they are, or does any body? There is a worse picture, in a large room, of some lads, which, too, the house-maid did not know. Adieu.

Dear sir,

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 7th, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

I DID receive the print of Mrs. Newcome, for which I am extremely obliged to you, with a thousand other favours, and should certainly have thanked you for it long ago, but I was then, and am now, confined to my bed with the gout in every limb, and in almost every joint. I have not been out of my bed-chamber these five weeks to-day; and last night the pain returned violently into one

of my feet; so that I am now writing to you in a most uneasy posture, which will oblige me to be very short.

Your letter, which I suppose was left at my house in Arlington-street by Mr. Essex, was brought to me this morning. I am exceedingly sorry for his disappointment, and for his coming without writing first, in which case I might have prevented his journey. I do not know even whither to send to him, to tell him how impossible it is for me just now, in my present painful and hopeless situation, to be of any use to him. I am so weak and faint, I do not see even my nearest relations, and God knows how long it will be before I am able to bear company, much less application. I have some thoughts, as soon as I am able, of removing to Bath; so that I cannot guess when it will be in my power to consider duly Mr. Essex's plan with him. I shall undoubtedly, *if* ever I am capable of it, be ready to give him my advice, such as it is; or to look over his papers, and even to correct them, if his modesty thinks me more able to polish them than he is himself. At the same time I must own, I think he will run too great a risk by the expense. The engravers in London are now arrived at such a pitch of exorbitant imposition, that, for my own part, I have laid aside all thoughts of having a single plate more done.

Dear sir, pray tell Mr. Essex how concerned I am for this mischance, and for the total impossibi-

lity I am under of seeing him now. I can write no more, but shall be glad to hear from you on his return to Cambridge: and when I am recovered, you may be assured how glad I shall be to talk his plan over with him. I am his and

Your obliged humble servant.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

I HAVE had a relapse, and not been able to use my hand, or I should have lamented with you on the plunder of your prints by that Algerine hog.[1] I pity you, dear sir, and feel for your awkwardness, that was struck dumb at his rapaciousness. The beast has no sort of taste neither—and in a twelvemonth will sell them again. I regret particularly one print, which I dare to say he seized, that I gave you, Gertrude More; I thought I had another, and had not; and, as you liked it, I never told you so. This Muley Moloch used to buy books, and now sells them. He has hurt his fortune, and ruined

---

[1] This letter may want some explanation. A gentleman, a collector of prints, and a neighbour of Mr. Walpole's, had just before requested to see Mr. Cole's Collection, and on Mr. Cole's offering to accommodate him with such heads as he had not, he selected and took away no less than one hundred and eighty-seven of the most rare and valuable.

himself to have a collection, without any choice of what it should be composed. It is the most under-bred swine I ever saw; but I did not know it was so ravenous. I wish you may get paid any how; you see by my writing how difficult it is to me, and therefore will excuse my being short.

Yours ever.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBURY.

Arlington-street, Dec. 29, 1772.

INDEED, madam, I want you and Mr. Conway in town. Christmas has dispersed all my company, and left nothing but a loo-party or two. If all the fine days were not gone out of town too, I should take the air in a morning; but I am not yet nimble enough, like old Mrs. Nugent, to jump out of a post-chaise into an assembly.

You have a woful taste, my lady, not to like lord G****'s bon mot. I am almost too indignant to tell you of a most amusing book in six volumes, called *Histoire philosophique et politique du commerce des deux Indes.* It tells one every thing in the world —how to make conquests, invasions, blunders, settlements, bankruptcies, fortunes, &c.; tells you the natural and historical history of all nations; talks commerce, navigation, tea, coffee, china, mines, salt, spices; of the Portuguese, English,

French, Dutch, Danes, Spaniards, Arabs, Caravans, Persians, Indians, of Louis XIV. and the king of Prussia; of la Bourdonnois, Dupleix, and admiral Saunders; of rice, and women that dance naked; of camels, gingams and muslin; of millions of millions of livres, pounds, rupees, and gouries; of iron, cables, and Circassian women; of law and the Missisippi; and against all governments and religions. This and every thing else is in the two first volumes. I cannot conceive what is left for the four others. And all is so mixed, that you learn forty new trades, and fifty new histories, in a single chapter. There is spirit, wit, and clearness—and if there were but less avoirdupois weight in it, it would be the richest book in the world in materials—but figures to me are so many cyphers, and only put me in mind of children that say, an hundred hundred hundred millions. However, it has made me learned enough to talk about Mr. Sykes and the secret committee,[1] which is all that any body talks of at present; and yet mademoiselle Heinel is arrived. This is all I know, and a great deal too, considering I know nothing—and yet, were there either truth or lies, I should know them, for one hears every thing in a sick room. Good night both!

---

[1] Upon East Indian affairs.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, Jan. 8, 1773.

IN return to your very kind inquiries, dear sir, I can let you know, that I am quite free from pain, and walk a little about my room, even without a stick: nay, have been four times to take the air in the park. Indeed, after fourteen weeks this is not saying much; but it is a worse reflection, that when one is subject to the gout, and far from young, one's worst account will probably be better than that after the next fit. I neither flatter myself on one hand, nor am impatient on the other—for will either do one any good? one must bear one's lot whatever it be.

I rejoice Mr. * * * * has justice,[1] though he had no bowels. How Gertrude More escaped him I do not guess. It will be wrong to rob you of her, after she has come to you through so many hazards —nor would I hear of it, either, if you have a mind to keep her, or have not given up all thoughts of a collection since you have been visited by a Visigoth.

I am much more impatient to see Mr. Gray's print, than Mr. What-d'ye-call-him's answer to my

[1] The gentleman that had carried off so many of Mr. Cole's prints. He had now fully remunerated Mr. Cole in a valuable present of books.

historic doubts.[2] He may have made himself very angry; but I doubt whether he will make me at all so. I love antiquities: but I scarce ever knew an antiquary who knew how to write upon them. Their understandings seem as much in ruins as the things they describe. For the Antiquarian Society, I shall leave them in peace with Whittington and his cat. As my contempt for them has not, however, made me disgusted with what they do not understand, antiquities, I have published two numbers of Miscellanies, and they are very welcome to mumble them with their toothless gums. I want to send you these—not their gums, but my pieces, and a Grammont, of which I have printed only an hundred copies, and which will be extremely scarce, as twenty-five copies are gone to France. Tell me how I shall convey them safely.

Another thing you must tell me, if you can, is, if you know any thing ancient of the Free-masons. Governor Pownal, a Whittingtonian, has a mind they should have been a corporation erected by the popes. As you see what a good creature I am, and return good for evil, I am engaged to pick up what I can for him, to support this system, in which I believe no more than in the pope: and the work is to appear in a volume of the Society's pieces. I am very willing to oblige him, and turn

---

[2] Mr. Masters's pamphlet, printed at the expense of the Antiquarian Society in the second volume of the Archæologia.

my cheek, that they may smite that also. Lord help them! I am sorry they are such numsculls, that they almost make me think myself something! but there are great authors enough to bring me to my senses again. Posterity, I fear, will class me with the writers of this age, or forget me with them, not rank with any names that deserve remembrance. If I cannot survive the Milles's, the what-d'ye-call-him's, and the compilers of catalogues of topography, it would comfort me very little to confute them. I should be as little proud of success, as if I had carried a contest for churchwarden.

Not being able to return to Strawberry-hill, where all my books and papers are, and my printer lying fallow, I want some short bills to print. Have you any thing you wish printed? I can either print a few to amuse ourselves, or, if very curious, and not too dry, could make a third number of Miscellaneous Antiquities.

I am not in any eagerness to see Mr. What-d'ye-call-him's pamphlet against me; therefore pray give yourself no trouble to get it for me. The specimens I have seen of his writing take off all edge from curiosity. A print of Mr. Gray will be a real present. Would it not be dreadful to be commended by an age that had not taste enough to admire his odes? Is not it too great a compliment to me to be abused too? I am ashamed! Indeed our antiquaries ought to like me. I am

but too much on a par with them. Does not Mr. Henshaw come to London? Is he a professor, or only a lover of engraving? If the former, and he were to settle in town, I would willingly lend him heads to copy. Adieu.

Dear sir, believe me,

Ever most faithfully yours.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, Feb. 18, 1773.

The most agreeable ingredient of your last, dear sir, is the paragraph that tells me you shall be in town in April, when I depend on the pleasure of seeing you; but, to be certain, wish you would give me a few days law, and let me know too where you lodge. Pray bring your books, though the continuation of the Miscellaneous Antiquities is uncertain. I thought the affectation of loving veteran anecdotes was so vigorous, that I ventured to print five hundred copies. One hundred and thirty only are sold. I cannot afford to make the town perpetual presents: though I find people exceedingly eager to obtain them when I do; and if they will not buy them, it is a sign of such indifference, that I shall neither bestow my time, or my cost, to no purpose. All I desire is, to pay the expenses, which I can afford much less than

my idle moments. Not but the operations of my press have often turned against myself in many shapes. I have told people many things they did not know, and from fashion they have bought a thousand things out of my hands, which they do not understand, and only love *en passant*. At Mr. West's sale, I got literally nothing: his prints sold for the frantic sum of 1495*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*. Your and my good friend Mr. Gulston threw away above 200*l.* there.

I am not sorry Mr. Lort has recourse to the fountain-head: Mr. Pownal's system of Free-masonry is so absurd and groundless, that I am glad to be rid of intervention. I have seen the former once: he told me he was willing to sell his prints, as the value of them is so increased—for that very reason I did not want to purchase them.

Paul Sandby promised me ten days ago to shew Mr. Henshaw's engravings (which I received from Dr. Ewen) to Bartolozzi, and ask his terms, thinking he would delight in so very promising a scholar; but I have heard nothing since, and therefore fear there is no success. Let me however see the young man when he comes, and I will try if there is any other way of serving him.

What shall I say to you, dear sir, about Dr. Prescot? or what shall I say to him? It hurts me not to be very civil, especially as any respect to my father's memory touches me much more than any attention to myself, which I cannot hold to

be a quarter so well founded. Yet how dare I write to a poor man, who may do, as I have lately seen done by a Scotch woman that wrote a play,[1] and printed lord Chesterfield's and lord Lyttleton's letters to her, as *Testimonia Auctorum:* I will therefore beg you to make my compliments and thanks to the master, and to make them as grateful as you please, provided I am dispensed with giving any certificate under my hand. You may plead my illness, which though the fifth month ended yesterday, is far from being at an end. My relapses have been endless: I cannot yet walk a step: and a great cold has added an ague in my cheek, for which I am just going to begin the bark. The prospect for the rest of my days is gloomy. The case of my poor nephew still more deplorable: he arrived in town last night, and bore his journey tolerably—but his head is in much more danger of not recovering than his health; though they give us hopes of both. But the evils of life are not good subjects for letters—Why afflict one's friends? Why make common-place reflections?

Adieu; yours ever.

---

[1] Sir Harry Gaylove; or, Comedy in Embryo.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, April 7, 1773.

I have now seen the 2d vol. of the Archæologia, or Old Woman's Logic, with Mr. Masters's Answer to me. If he had not taken such pains to declare it was written against my doubts, I should have thought it a defence of them; for the few facts he quotes make for my arguments, and confute himself; particularly in the case of lady Eleanor Butler; whom, by the way, he makes *marry* her own *nephew*, and not *descend* from her *own family*, because she was *descended* from her *grandfather*.

This Mr. Masters is an excellent Sanco Panza to such a Don Quixote as dean Milles! But enough of such goosecaps!

Pray thank Mr. Ashby for his admirable correction of sir Thomas Wyat's *bon mot*. It is right beyond all doubt, and I will quote it if ever the piece is reprinted.

Mr. Tyson surprises me by usurping your Dissertation. It seems all is fish that comes to the net of the Society. Mercy on us! What a cartload of brick and rubbish, and Roman ruins they have piled together! I have found nothing tolerable in the volume but the Dissertation of Mr. Maseres; which is followed by an answer, that,

like Masters's, contradicts him, without disproving any thing.

Mr. West's books are selling outrageously. His family will make a fortune by what he collected from stalls and Morefields. But I must not blame the virtuosi, having surpassed them. In short I have bought his two pictures of Henry V. and Henry VIII. and their families; the first of which is engraved in my Anecdotes, or as the catalogue says, engraved by Mr. H. Walpole, and the second described there. The first cost me 38*l.*, and the last 84*l.*, though I knew Mr. West bought it for six guineas. But, in fact, these two, with my marriages of Henry VI. and VII., compose such a suite of the house of Lancaster, and enrich my Gothic house so completely, that I would not deny myself. The Henry VII. cost me as much, and is less curious: the price of antiquities is so exceedingly risen too at present, that I expected to have paid more. I have bought much cheaper at the same sale, a picture of Henry VIII. and Charles V. in one piece, both much younger than ever I saw any portrait of either.

I hope your pilgrimage to St. Gulaston's this month will take place, and that you will come and see them. Adieu,

Dear sir,

Yours ever.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, April 27, 1773.

I HAD not time this morning to answer your letter by Mr. Essex, but I gave him the card you desired. You know, I hope, how happy I am to obey any orders of yours.

In the paper I shewed you in answer to Masters, you saw I was apprised of Rastel's Chronicle: but pray do not mention my knowing of it; because I draw so much from it, that I lie in wait, hoping that Milles, or Masters, or some of their fools, will produce it against me; and then I shall have another word to say to them, which they do not expect, since they think Rastel makes for them.

Mr. Gough wants to be introduced to me! Indeed! I would see him as he has been midwife to Masters; but he is so dull, that he would only be troublesome—and besides you know I shun authors, and would never have been one myself, if it obliged me to keep such bad company. They are always in earnest, and think their profession serious, and dwell upon trifles and reverence learning. I laugh at all those things, and write only to laugh at them, and divert myself. None of us are authors of any consequence; and it is the most ridiculous of all vanities to be vain of being *mediocre*. A page in a great author humbles me to the dust, and the conversation of those that are not superior

to myself, reminds me of what will be thought of myself. I blush to flatter them, or to be flattered by them, and should dread letters being published some time or other, in which they should relate our interviews, and we should appear like those puny conceited witlings in Shenstone's and Hugh's Correspondence, who give themselves airs from being in possession of the soil of Parnassus for the time being; as peers are proud, because they enjoy the estates of great men who went before them. Mr. Gough is very welcome to see Strawberry-hill; or I would help him to any scraps in my possession, that would assist his publications; though he is one of those industrious, who are only reburying the dead—but I cannot be acquainted with him. It is contrary to my system, and my humour; and, besides, I know nothing of barrows, and Danish entrenchments, and Saxon barbarisms, and Phœnician characters—in short, I know nothing of those ages that knew nothing—then how should I be of use to modern litterati? All the Scotch metaphysicians have sent me their works. I did not read one of them, because I do not understand, what is not understood by those that write about it; and I did not get acquainted with one of the writers. I should like to be intimate with Mr. Anstey, even though he wrote Lord Buckhorse, or with the author of the Heroic Epistle—I have no thirst to know the rest of my contemporaries, from the absurd bombast of Dr. Johnson

down to the silly Dr. Goldsmith; though the latter changeling has had bright gleams of parts, and the former had sense, 'till he changed it for words, and sold it for a pension. Don't think me scornful. Recollect that I have seen Pope, and lived with Gray. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. Mr. Essex has shewn me a charming drawing, from a charming round window at Lincoln. It has revived all my eagerness to have him continue his plan.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 4, 1773.

I SHOULD not have hurried to answer your letter, dear sir, the moment I receive it, but to send you another ticket[1] for your sister, in case she should not have recovered the other: and I think you said she was to stay but a fortnight in town. I would have sent it to her, had I known whither: and I have made it for five persons, in case she should have a mind to carry so many.

I am sorry for the young engraver; but I can

---

[1] Of admission to Strawberry.

by no means meddle with his going abroad, without the father's consent. It would be very wrong, and would hurt the young man essentially, if the father has any thing to leave. In any case, I certainly would not be accessory to sending away the son against the father's will. The father is an impertinent fool—but that you and I cannot help.

Pray be not uneasy about Gertrude More: I shall get the original; or at least a copy. Tell me how I shall send you martagons by the safest conveyance, or any thing else you want. I am always in your debt; and the apostle-spoon will make the debtor side in my book of gratitude run over.

Your public orator has done me too much honour by far — especially as he named me with my father,[2] to whom I am so infinitely inferior, both in parts and virtues. Though I have been abused undeservedly, I feel I have more title to censure than praise, and will subscribe to the former sooner than to the latter. Would not it be prudent to look upon the encomium as a funeral oration, and consider myself as dead? I have always dreaded outliving myself, and writing after what small talents I have should be decayed. Except the last volume of the Anecdotes of Painting, which has been finished and printed so long, and which, appear when

---

[2] On presenting a relation of Mr. Walpole's to the vice-chancellor for his honorary degree.

they may, will still come too late for many reasons, I am disposed never to publish any more of my own self; but I do not say so positively, lest my breaking my intention should be but another folly. The gout has, however, made me so indolent and inactive, that if my head does not inform me how old I grow, at least my mind and my feet will — and can one have too many monitors of one's weakness?

I am sorry you think yourself so much inconvenienced by stirring from home. This is an *incommodity* by which your friends will suffer more than yourself, and nobody more sensibly than

Yours most sincerely.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 29, 1773.

Dear Sir,

I have been so much taken up of late with poor lord Orford's affairs, that I have not had, and scarce have now, time to write you a line, and thank you for all your kindnesses, informations, and apostle-spoon. I have not Newcomb's Repertorium, and shall be obliged to you for the transcript; not as doubting, but to confirm what Heaven, king Edward I., and the bishop of the Tartars, have deposed in favour of Malibrunus,

the Jew-painter's abilities. I should sooner have suspected that Mr. Masters would have produced such witnesses to condemn Richard III. The note relating to lady Boteler does not relate to her marriage.

I send you two martagon roots, and some jonquils; and have added some prints, two enamelled pictures, and three medals. One of Oliver, by Simon; a fine one of Pope Clement X, and a scarce one of Archbishop Sancroft and the seven bishops. I hope the two latter will atone for the first. As I shall never be out of your debt, pray draw on me for any more other roots, or any thing that will be agreeable to you, and excuse me at present.

Yours most assuredly.

To Dr. BERKENHAUT.

July 6, 1773.

Sir,

I am so much engaged in private business at present, that I have not had time to thank you for the favour of your letter: nor can I now answer it to your satisfaction.

My life has been too insignificant to afford materials interesting to the public. In general, the lives of mere authors are dry and unentertaining; nor,

though I have been one occasionally, are my writings of a class or merit to entitle me to any distinction. I can as little furnish you, sir, with a list of them or their dates, which would give me more trouble to make out than is worth while. If I have any merit with the public, it is for printing and preserving some valuable works of others; and if ever you write the lives of printers, I may be enrolled in the number. My own works, I suppose, are dead and buried; but as I am not impatient to be interred with them, I hope you will leave that office to the parson of the parish, and I shall be, as long as I live,

Your obliged humble servant.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, August 30, 1773.

I returned last night from Houghton,[1] where multiplicity of business detained me four days longer than I intended, and where I found a scene infinitely more mortifying than I expected; though I certainly did not go with a prospect of finding a

---

[1] Where he had gone during the insanity of his nephew George earl of Orford, to endeavour to settle and arrange his affairs.

land flowing with milk and honey. Except the pictures, which are in the finest preservation, and the woods, which are become forests, all the rest is ruin, desolation, confusion, disorder, debts, mortgages, sales, pillage, villany, waste, folly, and madness. I do not believe that five thousand pounds would put the house and buildings into good repair. The nettles and brambles in the park are up to your shoulders; horses have been turned into the garden, and banditti lodged in every cottage. The perpetuity of livings that come up to the park-pales have been sold—and every farm let for half its value. In short, you know how much family-pride I have, and consequently may judge how much I have been mortified!—Nor do I tell you half, or *near* the worst circumstances. I have just stopped the torrent—and that is all. I am very uncertain whether I must not fling up the trust; and some of the difficulties in my way seem unsurmountable, and too dangerous not to alarm even my zeal; since I must not ruin myself, and hurt those for whom I must feel too, only to restore a family that will end with myself, and to retrieve an estate, from which I am not likely ever to receive the least advantage.

If you will settle with the C****s your journey to Chalfont, and will let me know the day, I will endeavour to meet you there; I hope it will not be till next week. I am overwhelmed with business—but indeed I know not when I

shall be otherwise! I wish you joy of this endless summer.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, Sept 24, 1773.

THE multiplicity of business which I found chalked out to me by my journey to Houghton, has engaged me so much, my dear lord, and the unpleasant scene opened to me there struck me so deeply, that I have neither had time nor cheerfulness enough to flatter myself I could amuse my friends by my letters. Except the pictures, I found every thing worse than I expected, and the prospect almost too bad to give me courage to pursue what I am doing. I am totally ignorant in most of the branches of business that are fallen to my lot, and not young enough to learn any new lesson well. All I can hope is to clear the worst part of the way; for in undertaking to retrieve an estate, the beginning is certainly the most difficult of the work—it is fathoming a chaos. But I will not unfold a confusion to your lordship which your good sense will always keep you from experiencing—very unfashionably; for the first geniuses of this age hold, that the best method of governing the world is to throw it into disorder.

The experiment is not yet complete, as the re-arrangement is still to come.

I am very seriously glad of the birth of your nephew,[1] my lord. I am going this evening with my gratulations; but have been so much absent, and so hurried, that I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing lady Anne,[2] though I have called twice. To Gunnersbury I have had no summons this summer: I receive such honours, or the want of them, with proper respect. Lady * * *, I fear, is in chace of a *Dulcineus* that she will never meet. When the ardour of peregrination is a little abated, will not she probably give into a more comfortable pursuit; and, like a print I have seen of the blessed martyr Charles I., abandon the hunt of *a corruptible* for that of *an incorruptible crown?* There is another beatific print just published in that style: it is of lady Huntingdon. With much pompous humility, she looks like an old basket-woman trampling on her coronet at the mouth of a cavern. — Poor Whitfield! If he was forced to do the honours of the *spelunca!* — Saint Fanny Shirley is nearer consecration. I was told two days ago that she had written a letter to lady Selina that was not intelligible. Her grace of Kingston's glory approaches to consummation in a more

---

1 A son of John earl of Buckingham, who died young.

2 Lady Anne Conolly.

worldly style. The duke is dying, and has given her the whole estate, 17,000*l.* a year. I am told she has already notified the contents of the will, and made offers of the sale of Thoresby. Pious matrons have various ways of expressing decency.

Your lordship's new bow-window thrives.—I do not want it to remind me of its master and mistress, to whom

I am ever the most devoted humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1773.

I AM very sorry, my dear lord, that you are coming towards us so slowly and unwillingly. I cannot quite wonder at the latter. The world is an old acquaintance that does not improve upon one's hands:—however, one must not give way to the disgusts it creates. My maxim, and practice too, is to laugh, because I do not like to cry. I could shed a pail-full of tears over all I have seen and learnt since my poor nephew's misfortune—the more one has to do with men the worse one finds them. But can one mend them?—No. Shall we shut ourselves up from them?—No. We should grow humourists—and of all animals an Englishman is least made to live alone. For my part, I am conscious of so many faults, that I

think I grow better the more bad I see in my neighbours; and there are so many I would not resemble, that it makes me watchful over myself. You, my lord, who have forty more good qualities than I have, should not seclude yourself. I do not wonder you despise knaves and fools; but remember, they want better examples. They will never grow ashamed by conversing but with one another.

I came to settle here on Friday, being drowned out of Twickenham. I find the town desolate, and no news in it, but that the ministry give up the Irish tax — some say, because it will not pass even in Ireland; others, because the city of London would have petitioned against it; and some, because there were factions in the council — which is not the most incredible of all. I am glad, for the sake of some of my friends who would have suffered by it, that it is over. In other respects, I have too much private business of my own to think about the public, which is big enough to take care of itself.

I have heard of some of lady * * *'s mortifications. I have regard and esteem for her good qualities, which are many — but I doubt her genius will never suffer her to be quite happy. As she will not take the psalmist's advice of not putting trust, I am sure she would not follow mine; for, with all her piety, king David is the only royal person she will not listen to, and there-

fore I forbear my sweet counsel. When she and lord H * * * meet, will not they put you in mind of count Gage and lady Mary Herbert, who met in the mines of Asturias after they had failed of the crown of Poland? — Adieu, my dear lord! Come you and my lady among us. You have some friends that are not odious, and who will be rejoiced to see you both — witness, for one,

Yours most faithfully.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, May 4, 1774.

DEAR SIR,

WE have dropped one another, as if we were not antiquaries, but people of this world — or do you disclaim me, because I have quitted the Society? I could give you but too sad reasons for my silence. The gout kept entire possession of me for six months; and before it released me, lord Orford's illness and affairs engrossed me totally. I have been twice in Norfolk since you heard from me. I am now at liberty again. What is your account of yourself? To ask you to come above ground, even so far as to see me, I know is in vain — or I certainly would ask it. You impose Carthusian shackles on yourself, will not quit your

cell, nor will speak above once a week. I am glad even to hear of you, and to see your hand, though you make that as much like print as you can. If you were to be tempted abroad, it would be a pilgrimage: and I can lure you even with that. My chapel is finished, and the shrine will actually be placed in less than a fortnight. My father is said to have said, that every man had his price. You are a *Beatus* indeed, if you resist a shrine. Why should not you add to your claustral virtues that of a peregrination to Strawberry? You will find me quite alone in July. Consider, Strawberry is almost the last monastery left, at least in England. Poor Mr. Bateman's is despoiled. Lord Bateman has stripped and plundered it: has sequestered the best things, has advertised the scite, and is dirtily selling by auction, what he neither would keep, nor can sell for a sum that is worth while. I was hurt to see half the ornaments of the chapel, and the reliquaries, and in short a thousand trifles, exposed to sneers. I am buying a few to keep for the founder's sake. Surely it is very indecent for a favourite relation, who is rich, to shew so little remembrance and affection. I suppose Strawberry will have the same fate! It has already happened to two of my friends. Lord Bristol got his mother's house from his brother, by persuading her he was in love with it. He let it in a month after she was

dead—and all her favourite pictures and ornaments, which she had ordered not to be removed, are mouldering in a garret!

You are in the right to care so little for a world, where there is no measure but avoirdupois. Adieu!

Yours sincerely.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, May 28, 1774.

NOTHING will be more agreeable to me, dear sir, than a visit from you in July. I will try to persuade Mr. Granger to meet you: and if you had any such thing as summer in the fens, I would desire you to bring a bag with you. We are almost freezing here in the midst of beautiful verdure, with a profusion of blossoms and flowers: but I keep good fires, and seem to feel warm weather while I look through the window; for the way to ensure summer in England, is to have it framed and glazed in a comfortable room.

I shall be still more glad to hear you are settled in your living. Burnham is almost in my neighbourhood; and its being in that of Eton and Windsor, will more than console you, I hope, for leaving Ely and Cambridge. Pray let me know the moment you are certain. It would now be a

disappointment to me as well as you. You shall be inaugurated in my chapel, which is much more venerable than your parish church, and has the genuine air of antiquity. I bought very little of poor Mr. Bateman's. His nephew disposed of little that was worth house-room, and yet pulled the whole to pieces.

Mr. Pennant has published a new Tour to Scotland and the Hebrides: and though he has endeavoured to paint their dismal isles and rocks in glowing colours, they will not be satisfied; for he seems no bigot about Ossian, at least in some passages, and is free in others, which their intolerating spirit will resent. I cannot say the book is very entertaining to me, as it is more a book of rates, than of antiquities. The most amusing part was communicated to him by Mr. Banks, who found whole islands that bear nothing but columns, as other places do grass and barley. There is a beautiful cave called Fingal's; which proves that nature loves Gothic architecture.

Mr. Pennant has given a new edition of his former Tour with more cuts. Among others, is the vulgar head, called the countess of Desmond. I told him I had discovered, and proved past contradiction, that it is Rembrandt's mother. He owned it, and said, he would correct it by a note —but he has not. This is a brave way of being an antiquary! as if there could be any merit in giving for genuine, what one knows to be spurious.

He is, indeed, a superficial man, and knows little of history or antiquity: but he has a violent rage for being an author. He set out with Ornithology, and a little Natural History, and picks up his knowledge as he rides. I have a still lower idea of Mr. Gough: for Mr. Pennant, at least, is very civil: the other is a hog. Mr. Fenn, another smatterer in antiquity, but a very good sort of man, told me, Mr. Gough desired to be introduced to me—but as he has been such a bear to you,[1] he shall not come. The Society of Antiquaries put me in mind of what the old lord Pembroke said to Anstis, the herald: "Thou silly fellow, thou dost not know thy own silly business." If they went beyond taste, by poking into barbarous ages, when there was no taste, one could forgive them —but they catch at the first ugly thing they see, and take it for old, because it is new to them, and then usher it pompously into the world, as if they had made a discovery: though they have not yet cleared up a single point that is of the least importance, or that tends to settle any obscure passage in history.

I will not condole with you, on having had

---

[1] Alluding to his not having answered a letter from Mr. Cole for nearly a twelvemonth.

the gout, since you find it has removed other complaints. Besides, as it begins late, you are never likely to have it severely. I shall be in terrors in two or three months, having had the four last fits periodically and biennially. Indeed the two last were so long and severe, that my remaining and shattered strength could ill support such.

I must repeat how glad I shall be to have you at Burnham. When people grow old, as you and I do, they should get together. Others do not care for us: but we seem wiser to one another by finding fault with them. Not that I am apt to dislike young folks, whom I think every thing becomes: but it is a kind of self-defence to live in a body. I dare to say, that monks never find out that they grow old fools. Their age gives them authority, and nobody contradicts them. In the world one cannot help perceiving one is out of fashion. Women play at cards with women of their own standing, and censure others between the deals, and thence conclude themselves Gamaliels. *I*, who see many young men with better parts than myself, submit with a good grace, or retreat hither to my castle, where I am satisfied with what I have done, and am always in good humour. But I like to have one or two old friends with me. I do not much invite the juvenile, who think my castle and me of equal anti-

quity: for no wonder if they suppose George I. lived in the time of the crusades.

Adieu, my good sir, and pray let Burnham Wood and Dunsinane be good neighbours.

Yours ever.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, June 21, 1774.

Your illness, dear sir, is the worst excuse you could make me; and the worse, as you may be well in a night, if you will, by taking six grains of James's Powder. He cannot cure death; but he can most complaints that are not mortal or chronical. He could cure you so soon of colds, that he would cure you of another distemper, to which I doubt you are a little subject, the *fear of them*. I hope you was certain, that illness is a legal plea for missing induction, or you will have nursed a cough and hoarseness with too much tenderness; as they certainly could bear a journey. Never see my face again, if you are not rector of Burnham. How can you be so bigotted to Milton? I should have thought the very name would have prejudiced you against the place, as the name is all that could approach towards reconciling me to the fens. I shall be very glad to see

you here, whenever you have resolution enough to quit your cell. But since Burnham and the neighbourhood of Windsor and Eton have no charms for you, can I expect that Strawberry-hill should have any? Methinks when one grows old, one's contemporary friends should be our best amusement: for younger people are soon tired of us, and our old stories: but I have found the contrary in some of mine. For your part, you care for conversing with none but the dead: for I reckon the unborn, for whom you are writing, as much dead, as those from whom you collect.

You certainly ask no favour, dear sir, when you want prints of me. They are at any body's service that thinks them worth having. The owner sets very little value on them, since he sets very little indeed on himself: as a man a very faulty one; and as an author, a very middling one: which whoever thinks a comfortable rank, is not at all of my opinion. Pray convince me that you think I mean sincerely, by not answering me with a compliment. It is very weak to be pleased with flattery; the stupidest of all delusions to beg it. From you I should take it ill. We have known one another almost fifty years—to very little purpose, indeed, if any ceremony is necessary, or downright sincerity not established between us. Only tell me that you are recovered, and that I shall see you some time or other. I have finished the catalogue of my collection; but

you shall never have it without fetching, nor, though a less punishment, the prints you desire. I propose in time to have plates of my house added to the catalogue, yet I cannot afford them, unless by degrees. Engravers are grown so much dearer, without my growing richer, that I must have patience! a quality I seldom have, *but* when I *must*. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. I have lately been at Ampthill, and saw queen Catherine's cross. It is not near large enough for the situation, and would be fitter for a garden than a park: but it is executed in the truest and best taste. Lord Ossory is quite satisfied, as well as I, and designs Mr. Essex a present of some guineas. If ever I am richer, I shall consult the same honest man about building my offices, for which I have a plan: but if I have no more money ever, I will not run in debt, and distress myself: and therefore remit my designs to chance and a little economy.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Matson, near Gloucester, Aug. 15, 1774.

Dear Sir,

As I am your disciple in antiquities, (for you studied them when I was but a scoffer) I think it

my duty to give you some account of my journeyings in the good cause. You will not dislike my date. I am in the very mansion, where king Charles I. and his two eldest sons lay during the siege; and there are marks of the last's hacking with his hanger on a window, as he told Mr. Selwyn's grandfather afterwards. The present master has done due honour to the royal residence, and erected a good marble bust of the Martyr, in a little gallery. In a window is a shield in painted glass, with that king's, and his queen's arms, which I gave him. So you see I am not a rebel, when *alma mater* antiquity stands godmother.

I went again to the Cathedral, and on seeing the monument of Edward II. a new historic doubt started, which I pray you to solve. His majesty has a longish beard; and such were certainly worn at that time. Who is the first historian that tells the story of his being shaven with cold water from a ditch, and weeping to supply warm, as he was carried to Berkeley castle? Is not this apocryphal? The house whence bishop Hooper was carried to the stake, is still standing *tale quale*. I made a visit to his actual successor Warburton, who is very infirm, speaks with much hesitation; and they say, begins to lose his memory. They have destroyed the beautiful cross: the two battered heads of Henry III. and Edward III. are in the post-master's garden.

Yesterday I made a jaunt four miles hence that pleased me exceedingly, to Prinknash, the individual villa of the abbots of Gloucester. I wished you there with their mitre on. It stands on a glorious, but impracticable hill, in the midst of a little forest of beech, and commanding Elysium. The house is small, but has good rooms, and though modernized here and there, not extravagantly. On the ceiling of the hall is Edward IVth's jovial device, a *fau-con serrure*. The chapel is low and small, but antique, and with painted glass, with many angels in their coronation robes, *i. e.* wings and crowns. Henry VIII. and Jane Seymour lay here: in the dining room are their arms in glass, and of Catherine of Arragon, and of Bray's and Bridges. Under a window, a barbarous bas-relief head of Harry, young: as it is still on a sign of an ale-house, on the descent of the hill. Think of my amazement, when they shewed me the chapel plate, and I found on it, on four pieces, my own arms, quartering my mother-in-law, Skerret's, and in a shield of pretence, those of Fortescue; certainly by mistake, for those of my sister-in-law, as the barony of Clinton was in abeyance between her, and Fortescue lord Clinton. The whole is modern and blundered: for Skerret should be impaled, not quartered, and instead of our crest, are two spears tied together in a ducal coronet, and no coronet for my brother, in whose time this plate must

have been made, and at whose sale it was probably bought; as he finished the repairs of the church at Houghton, for which, I suppose, this decoration was intended. But the silversmith was no herald you see.

As I descended the hill, I found in a wretched cottage, a child, in an ancient oaken cradle, exactly in the form of that lately published from the cradle of Edward II. I purchased it for five shillings; but don't know whether I shall have fortitude enough to transport it to Strawberry-hill. People would conclude me in my second childhood.

To-day I have been at Berkeley and Thornbury castles. The first disappointed me much, though very entire. It is much smaller than I expected, but very entire, except a small part burnt two years ago, while the present earl was in the house. The fire began in the house-keeper's room, who never appeared more; but as she was strict over the servants, and not a bone of her was found, it was supposed that she was murdered, and the body conveyed away. The situation is not elevated nor beautiful, and little improvements made of late, but some silly ones *à la Chinoise*, by the present dowager. In good sooth, I can give you but a very imperfect account; for instead of the lord's being gone to dine with the mayor of Gloucester, as I expected, I found him in the midst of all his captains of the militia. I am so sillily shy of

strangers and youngsters, that I hurried through the chambers, and looked for nothing but the way out of every room. I just observed that there were many bad portraits of the family, but none ancient; as if the Berkeleys had been commissaries and raised themselves in the last war. There is a plentiful addition of those of lord Berkeley of Stratton, but no knights templars, or barons as old as Edward I.; yet are there three beds on which there may have been as frisky doings three centuries ago, as there probably have been within these ten years. The room shown for the murder of Edward II., and the shrieks of an agonizing king, I verily believe to be genuine. It is a dismal chamber, almost at top of the house, quite detached, and to be approached only by a kind of foot-bridge, and from that descends a large flight of steps that terminate on strong gates; exactly a situation for a *corps de garde.* In that room they show you a cast of a face in plaister, and tell you it was taken from Edward's. I wsa not quite so easy of faith about that: for it is evidently the face of Charles I.

The steeple of the church, lately rebuilt handsomely, stands some paces from the body; in the latter are three tombs of the old Berkeleys, with cumbent figures. The wife of the lord Berkeley, who was supposed to be privy to the murder, has a curious head-gear; it is like a long horse-shoe, quilted in quaterfoils; and like lord Foppington's wig,

allows no more than the breadth of a half-crown to be discovered of the face. Stay, I think I mistake; the husband was a conspirator against Richard II. not Edward. But in those days, loyalty was not so rife as at present.

From Berkeley Castle I went to Thornbury, of which the ruins are half ruined. It would have been glorious, if finished. I wish the lords of Berkeley had retained the spirit of deposing till Henry the VIIIth's time! The situation is fine, though that was not the fashion; for all the windows of the great apartment look into the inner-court. The prospect was left to the servants. Here I had two adventures. I could find nobody to show me about. I saw a paltry house that I took for the sexton's, at the corner of the close, and bade my servant ring, and ask who could show me the Castle. A voice in a passion flew from a casement, and issued from a divine. "What! was it his business to shew the Castle? Go look for somebody else! What did the fellow ring for as if the house was on fire?" The poor Swiss came back in a fright, and said, the doctor had sworn at him. Well—we scrambled over a stone style, saw a room or two glazed near the gate, and rung at it. A damsel came forth, and satisfied our curiosity. When we had done seeing, I said, "Child, we don't know our way, and want to be directed into the London-road; I see the duke's steward yonder at the win-

dow, pray desire him to come to me, that I may consult him." She went—he stood staring at us at the window—and sent his footman. I do not think courtesy is resident at Thornbury. As I returned through the close, the divine came running out of breath, and without his beaver or band, and calls out, "Sir, I am come to justify myself: your servant says I swore at him: I am no swearer—Lord bless me! [dropping his voice] it is Mr. Walpole!" "Yes, sir, and I think you was lord Beauchamp's tutor at Oxford, but I have forgot your name." "Holwell, sir." "Oh! yes—" and then I comforted him, and laid the ill-breeding on my footman's being a foreigner; but could not help saying, I really had taken his house for the sexton's. "Yes, sir, it is not very good without, won't you please to walk in?" I did, and found the inside ten times worse, and a lean wife, suckling a child. He was making an Index to Homer, is going to publish the chief beauties, and I believe had just been reading some of the delicate civilities that pass between Agamemnon and Achilles, and that what my servant took for oaths, were only Greek compliments. Adieu.

Yours ever.

You see I have not a line more of paper.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, June 23, 1774.

I have nothing to say— which is the best reason in the world for writing; for one must have a great regard for any body one writes to, when one begins a letter neither on ceremony nor business. You are seeing armies,[1] who are always in fine order and great spirits when they are in cold blood: I am sorry you thought it worth while to realise what I should have thought you could have seen in your mind's eye. However, I hope you will be amused and pleased with viewing heroes, both in their autumn and their bud. Vienna will be a new sight; so will the Austrian eagle and its two heads. I should like *seeing* too, if any fairy would present me with a chest that would fly up into the air by touching a peg, and transport me whither I pleased in an instant: but roads, and inns, and dirt are terrible drawbacks on my curiosity. I grow so old, or so indolent, that I scarce stir from hence; and the dread of the gout makes me almost as much a prisoner, as a fit of it. News I know none, if there is any. The papers tell me the city was to present a petition to the king

---

1 Mr. Conway was now on a tour of military curiosity through Flanders, Germany, Prussia, and part of Hungary.

against the Quebec-bill yesterday; and I suppose they will tell me to-morrow whether it was presented. The king's speech tells me, there has nothing happened between the Russians and the Turks. Lady Barrymore told t'other day, that nothing was to happen between her and lord E*****. I am as well satisfied with these negatives, as I should have been with the contrary. I am much more interested about the rain, for it destroys all my roses and orange-flowers, of which I have exuberance; and my hay is cut, and cannot be made. However, it is delightful to have no other distresses. When I compare my present tranquillity and indifference with all I suffered last year,[2] I am thankful for my happiness, and enjoy it — unless the bell rings at the gate early in the morning — and then I tremble, and think it an express from Norfolk.

It is unfortunate, that when one has nothing to talk of but one's self, one should have nothing to say of one's self. It is shameful too to send such a scrap by the post. I think I shall reserve it till Tuesday. If I have then nothing to add, as is probable, you must content yourself with my good intentions, as I hope you will with this speculative campaign. Pray, for the future remain at home and build bridges: I wish you were here to

---

[2] During the illness of his nephew lord Orford.

expedite ours to Richmond, which they tell me will not be passable these two years. I have done looking so forward. Adieu!

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, August 18, 1774.

It is very hard, that because you do not get my letters, you will not let me receive yours, who do receive them. I have not had a line from you these five weeks. Of your honours and glories Fame has told me;[1] and for aught I know, you may be a *veldt-marshal* by this time, and despise such a poor cottager as me. Take notice, I shall disclaim you in my turn, if you are sent on a command against Dantzick, or to usurp a new district in Poland.

I have seen no armies, kings or empresses, and cannot send you such august gazettes; nor are they what I want to hear of. I like to hear you are well and diverted; nay, have pimped towards the latter, by desiring lady Ailesbury to send you monsieur de Guisnes's invitation to a military fête

---

1 Alluding to the distinguished notice taken of general Conway by the king of Prussia.

at Metz.[2] For my part, I wish you was returned to your plough. Your Sabine farm[3] is in high beauty. I have lain there twice within this week, going to and from a visit to George Selwyn near Gloucester: a tour as much to my taste as yours to you. For fortified towns I have seen ruined castles. Unluckily, in that of Berkeley I found a whole regiment of militia in garrison, and as many young officers as if * * * * * * * * * was in possession, and ready to surrender at indiscretion. I endeavoured to comfort myself by figuring that they were guarding Edward II. I have seen many other ancient sights without asking leave of the king of Prussia: it would not please me so much to write *to* him, as it once did to write *for* him.[4]

They have found at least seventy thousand pounds of lord Thomond's.[5] George Howard has decked himself with a red riband, money and honours!—Charming things! and yet one may be very happy without them.

---

[2] To see the review of the French regiment of carabineers, then commanded by monsieur de Guisnes.

[3] Park-place.

[4] Alluding to the letter to Rousseau in the name of the king of Prussia.

[5] Percy Wyndham Obrien. He was the second son of sir Charles Wyndham, the chancellor of the exchequer to queen Anne, and took the name of Obrien pursuant to the will of his uncle the earl of Thomond in Ireland.

The young * * * * * * * * * is returned from his travels in love with the pretender's queen, who has permitted him to have her picture. What can I tell you more? Nothing. Indeed, if I only write to postmasters, my letter is long enough. Every body's head but mine is full of elections. I had the satisfaction at Gloucester, where G. Selwyn is canvassing, of reflecting on my own wisdom: *Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis, &c.* I am certainly the greatest philosopher in the world, without ever having thought of being so: always employed, and never busy; eager about trifles, and indifferent to every thing serious. Well, if it is not philosophy, at least it is content. I am as pleased here with my own nutshell, as any monarch you have seen these two months astride his eagle — not but I was dissatisfied when I missed you at Park-place, and was peevish at your being in an Aulic chamber. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. They tell us from Vienna that the peace is made between Tisiphone and the Turk: Is it true?

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 7, 1774.

I did not think you had been so like the rest of the world, as, when you pretended to be visiting armies, to go in search of gold and silver mines![1] The favours of courts and the smiles of emperors and kings, I see, have corrupted even you, and perverted you to a nabob. Have you brought away an ingot in the calf of your leg? What abomination have you committed? All the gazettes in Europe have sent you on different negotiations: instead of returning with a treaty in your pocket, you will only come back with bills of exchange. I don't envy your subterraneous travels, nor the hospitality of the Hungarians. Where did you find a spoonful of Latin about you? I have not attempted to speak Latin these thirty years, without perceiving I was talking Italian thickened with terminations in *us* and *orum*. I should have as little expected to find an Ovid in those regions; but I suppose the gentry of Presburg read him for a fashionable author, as our 'squires and their wives do the last collections of ballads that have been sung at Vauxhall and Marybone. I wish

---

[1] Mr. Conway had gone to see the gold and silver mines of Cremnitz in the neighbourhood of Grau in Hungary.

you may have brought away some sketches of duke Albert's architecture. You know I deal in the works of royal authors, though I have never admired any of their own buildings, not excepting king Solomon's temple. Stanley[2] and Edmondson in Hungary! What carried them thither? The chase of mines too? The first, perhaps, waddled thither obliquely, as a parrot would have done whose direction was to Naples.

Well, I am glad you have been entertained, and seen such a variety of sights. You don't mind fatigues and hardships, and hospitality, the two extremes that to me poison travelling. I shall never see any thing more, unless I meet with a ring that renders one invisible. It was but the other day, that, being with George Selwyn at Gloucester, I went to view Berkeley castle, knowing the earl was to dine with the mayor of Gloucester. Alas! when I arrived, he had put off the party to enjoy his militia a day longer, and the house was full of officers. They might be in the Hungarian dress, for aught I knew; for I was so dismayed, that I would fain have persuaded the housekeeper that she could not show me the apartments; and when she opened the hall, and I saw it full of captains, I hid myself in a dark passage, and nothing could persuade me to enter, till they

[2] Mr. Hans Stanley.

had the civility to quit the place. When I was forced at last to go over the castle, I ran through it without seeing any thing, as if I had been afraid of being detained prisoner.

I have no news to send you: if I had any, I would not conclude, as all correspondents do, that lady Ailesbury left nothing untold. Lady P**** is gone to hold mobs at Ludlow, where there is actual war, and where a *knight*, I forget his name, one of their friends, has been *almost cut in two* with a scythe. When you have seen all the other armies in Europe, you will be just in time for many election-battles — perhaps for a war in America, whither more troops are going. Many of those already sent have deserted; and to be sure the prospect there is not smiling. *A-propos*, lord Mahon, whom lord Stanhope his father will not suffer to wear powder because wheat is so dear, was presented t'other day in coal black hair and a white feather: they said *he had been tarred and feathered.*

In France you will find a new scene.[3] The chancellor is sent, a little before his time, to the devil. The old parliament is expected back. I am sorry to say I shall not meet you there. It will be too late in the year for me to venture, especially as I now live in dread of my biennial gout,

[3] Upon the death of Louis XV.

and should die of it in an *hotel garni*, and forced to receive all comers — I, who you know lock myself up when I am ill, as if I had the plague.

I wish I could fill my sheet, in return for your five pages. The only thing you will care for knowing is, that I never saw Mrs. Damer better in her life, nor look so well. You may trust me, who am so apt to be frightened about her.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 27, 1774.

I should be very ungrateful indeed if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodness itself to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric positions. I am amazed, that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me so many and such long letters, over and above all those to lady Ailesbury, your daughter, brother, and other friends. Even lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your superabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never suspected. Even I enjoy for you the distinctions you have received — though I should hate such things for myself, as they are particularly troublesome to me, and I am particularly awkward

under them, and as I abhor the king of Prussia, and, if I passed through Berlin, should have no joy like avoiding him — like one of our countrymen, who changed horses at Paris, and asked what the name of that town was? All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil well-meaning people, and I believe one of the least corrupted nations in Europe. I don't think them very agreeable; but who do I think are so? A great many French women, some English men, and a few English women — exceedingly few French men. Italian women are the grossest, vulgarest of the sex. If an Italian man has a grain of sense, he is a buffoon —— So much for Europe.

I have already told you, and so must lady Ailesbury, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout used to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a suffering, such a helpless condition as I was in for five months and a half two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I should die at once if seized in a French inn; or what, if possible, would be worse, at Paris, where I must admit every body. — I, who you know can hardly bear to see even you when I am ill, and who shut up myself up here, and would not let lord and lady Hertford come near me — I, who have my room washed though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In short, I, who am so ca-

pricious, and whom you are pleased to call a philosopher, I suppose because I have given up every thing but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of every body's way! No, I must give up the satisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have just learnt to give up my pleasures, but I cannot give up my pains, which such selfish people as I, who have suffered much, grow to compose into a system, that they are partial to because it is their own. I must make myself amends when you return: you will be more stationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I shall have intervals of health. In lieu of me you will have a charming succedaneum lady *** ***. Her father, who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wish she may not have him to nurse, instead of diverting herself.

The present state of your country is, that it is drowned and dead drunk; all water without and wine within. Opposition for the next elections every where, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the question: the day after to-morrow will be a great bustle in the city for a lord mayor,[1] and all the

[1] When Mr. Wilkes was elected.

winter in Westminster, where lord Malton and Humphrey Cotes oppose the court. Lady * * * * is saving her money at Ludlow and Powis castles by keeping open-house day and night against sir Watkin Williams, and fears she shall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming last Sunday night from lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Isleworth. Then we ran against the piers of our new bridge, and the horses were frightened. Luckily my cicisbea was a catholic, and screamed to so many saints, that some of them at the nearest alehouse came and saved us, or I should have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I should; for I concluded we should be carried ashore somewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you see one may wrap one's self up in flannel and be in danger, without visiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaise to the proof.

I am ashamed of sending you but three sides of smaller paper in answer to seven large — but what can I do? I see nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My castle is finished, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods

around me; or, if I go to town, the family-party in Grosvenor-street. One trait will give you a sample of how I pass my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you, at least it was a fit of absence, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny tredrille with the duchess of Newcastle and lady Browne, and certainly not much interested in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I pushed the cards very gravely to the duchess, and said, "*Doctor*, you are to deal." You may guess at their astonishment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wish it may make you smile a moment, or that I had any thing better to send you. Adieu, most affectionately.

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 28, 1774.

LADY Ailesbury brings you this,[1] which is not a letter, but a paper of directions, and the counter-

---

1 Mr. Conway ended his military tour at Paris, whither lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer went to meet him, and where they spent the winter together.

part of what I have written to madame du Deffand. I beg of you seriously to take a great deal of notice of this dear old friend of mine. She will perhaps expect more attention from *you*, as my friend, and as it is her own nature a little, than will be quite convenient to you: but you have an infinite deal of patience and good nature, and will excuse it. I was afraid of her importuning lady Ailesbury, who has a vast deal to see and do, and therefore I have prepared mad. du D. and told her lady Ailesbury loves amusements, and that, having never been at Paris before, she must not confine her: so you must pay for both — and it will answer: and I do not, I own, ask this only for madame du Deffand's sake, but for my own, and a little for yours. Since the late king's death she has not dared to write to me freely, and I want to know the present state of France exactly, both to satisfy my own curiosity, and for her sake, as I wish to learn whether her pension, &c. is in any danger from the present ministry, some of whom are not her friends. She can tell you a great deal if she will — by that I don't mean that she is reserved, or partial to her own country against ours — quite the contrary; she loves me better than all France together — but she hates politics; and therefore, to make her talk on it, you must tell her it is to satisfy me, and that I want to know whether she is well at court, whether she has any fears from the government, particularly from Maurepas and

Nivernois; and that I am eager to have monsieur de Choiseul and *ma grandmaman* the duchess restored to power. If you take it on this foot easily, she will talk to you with the utmost frankness and with amazing cleverness. I have told her you are strangely absent, and that, if she does not repeat it over and over, you will forget every syllable: so I have prepared her to joke and be quite familiar with you at once. She knows more of personal characters, and paints them better than any body: but let this be between yourselves, for I would not have a living soul suspect that I get any intelligence from her, which would hurt her; and therefore I beg you not to let any human being know of this letter, nor of your conversations with her, neither English nor French.

Mad. du Deffand hates *les philosophes*, so you must give them up to her. She and madame Geoffrin are no friends: so, if you go thither, don't tell her of it. Indeed you would be sick of that house, whither all the pretended *beaux esprits* and *faux sçavants* go, and where they are very impertinent and dogmatic.

Let me give you one other caution, which I shall give lady Ailesbury too. Take care of your papers at Paris, and have a very strong lock to your *portefeuille*. In the *hotels garnis* they have double keys to every lock, and examine every drawer and paper of the English that they can get at. They will pilfer too whatever they can.—I was robbed of

half my clothes there the first time, and they wanted to hang poor Louis to save the people of the house who had stolen the things.

Here is another thing I must say. Madame du Deffand has kept a great many of my letters, and, as she is very old, I am in pain about them. I have written to her to beg she will deliver them up to you to bring back to me, and I trust she will. If she does, be so good to take great care of them. If she does not mention them, tell her just before you come away, that I begged you to bring them; and if she hesitates, convince her how it would hurt me to have letters written in very bad French, and mentioning several people, both French and English, fall into bad hands, and perhaps, be printed.

Let me desire you to read this letter more than once, that you may not forget my requests, which are very important to me; and I must give you one other caution, without which all would be useless. There is at Paris a mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, a pretended *bel esprit*, who was formerly an humble companion of madame du Deffand; and betrayed her and used her very ill. I beg of you not to let any body carry you thither. It would disoblige my friend of all things in the world, and she would never tell you a syllable; and I own it would hurt me, who have such infinite obligations to her, that I should be very unhappy, if a particular friend of mine showed her this disregard.

She has done every thing upon earth to please and serve me, and I owe it to her to be earnest about this attention. Pray do not mention it: it might look simple in me, and yet I owe it to her, as I know it would hurt her: and at her age, with her misfortunes, and with infinite obligations on my side, can I do too much to show my gratitude, or prevent her any new mortification? I dwell upon it, because she has some enemies so spiteful that they try to carry all English to mademoiselle de l'Espinasse.

I wish the duchess of Choiseul may come to Paris while you are there; but I fear she will not; you would like her of all things. She has more sense and more virtues than almost any human being. If you choose to see any of the *sçavants*, let me recommend monsieur Buffon. He has not only much more sense than any of them, but is an excellent old man, humane, gentle, well-bred, and with none of the arrogant pertness of all the rest. If he is at Paris, you will see a good deal of the comte de Broglie at madame du Deffand's. He is not a genius of the first water, but lively and sometimes agreeable. The court, I fear, will be at Fontainbleau, which will prevent your seeing many, unless you go thither. Adieu! at Paris! I leave the rest of my paper for England, if I happen to have any thing particular to tell you.

To the Rev. Mr. COLE.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 11, 1774.

Dear Sir,

I answer yours immediately; as one pays a shilling to clench a bargain, when one suspects the seller, I accept your visit in the last week of this month, and will prosecute you if you do not execute.

I have nothing to say about elections, but that I congratulate myself every time I feel I have nothing to do with them. By my nephew's strange conduct about his boroughs, and by many other reasons, I doubt whether he is so well as he seemed to Dr. Barnardiston. It is a subject I do not love to talk on; but I know I tremble every time the bell rings at my gate at an unusual hour.

Have you seen Mr. Granger's Supplement? Methinks it grows too diffuse. I have hinted to him that fewer panegyrics from funeral sermons would not hurt it. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday, October 16, 1774.

I received this morning your letter of the 6th from Strasburg; and before you get this you will

have had three from me by lady Ailesbury. One of them should have reached you much sooner; but lady Ailesbury kept it, not being sure where you was. It was in answer to one in which you told me an anecdote, which in this last you ask if I had received.

Your letters are always so welcome to me, that you certainly have no occasion for excusing what you say or do not say. Your details amuse me, and so would what you suppress; for, though I have no military genius or curiosity, whatever relates to yourself must interest me. The honours you have received, though I have so little taste for such things myself, gave me great satisfaction; and I do not know whether there is not more pleasure in *not* being a prophet in one's own country, when one is almost received like Mahomet in every other. To be an idol at home, is no assured touchstone of merit. Stocks and stones have been adored in fifty regions, but do not bear transplanting. The Apollo Belvedere and The Hercules Farnese may lose their temples, but never lose their estimation, by travelling.

Elections, you may be sure, are the only topic here at present — I mean in England — not on this quiet hill, where I think of them as little as of the spot where the battle of Blenheim was fought. They say there will not be much alteration, but the phœnix will rise from its ashes with most of its old plumes, or as bright. Wilkes at first seemed to

carry all before him, besides having obtained the mayoralty of London at last. Lady H * * * * told me last Sunday, that he would carry twelve members. I have not been in town since, nor know any thing but what I collect from the papers; so, if my letter is opened, M. de Vergennes will not amass any very authentic intelligence from my *dispatches*.

What I have taken notice of, is as follows: For the city Wilkes will have but three members: he will lose Crosby; and Townsend will carry Oliver. In Westminster, Wilkes will not have one; his Humphrey Cotes is by far the lowest on the poll; lord Percy and lord T. Clinton are triumphant there. Her grace of Northumberland sits at a window in Covent-garden, harangues the mob, and is "Hail, fellow, well met!" At Dover, Wilkes has carried one, and probably will come in for Middlesex himself with Glynn. There have been great endeavours to oppose him, but to no purpose. — Of this I am glad, for I do not love a mob so near as Brentford; especially as my road lies through it. Where he has any other interest I am too ignorant in these matters to tell you. Lord John Cavendish is opposed at York, and at the beginning of the poll had the fewest numbers. C * * * * F * * *, like the ghost in Hamlet, has shifted to many quarters; but in most the cock crew, and he walked off. In Southwark, there has been outrageous rioting; but I neither know

the candidates, their connections, nor success. This, perhaps, will appear a great deal of news at Paris: here, I dare to say, my butcher knows more.

I can tell you still less of America. There are two or three more ships with forces going thither, and sir William Draper as second in command.

Of private news, except that Dyson has had a stroke of palsy, and will die, there is certainly none; for I saw that shrill Morning Post, lady G * * * *, two hours ago, and she did not know a paragraph.

I forgot to mention to you M. de Maurepas. He was by far the ablest and most agreeable man I knew at Paris: and if you stay, I think I could take the liberty of giving you a letter to him; though, as he is now so great a man, and I remain so little an one, I don't know whether it would be quite so proper — though he was exceedingly good to me, and pressed me often to make him a visit in the country. — But lord Stormont can certainly carry you to him — a better passport.

There was one of my letters on which I wish to hear from you. There are always English coming from Paris, who would bring such a parcel; at least you might send me one volume at a time, and the rest afterwards: but I should not care to have them ventured by the common conveyance. Madame du Deffand is negotiating for an enamel picture for me; but if she obtains it, I had rather wait for it till you come. The books I mean, are

those I told you lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer would give you a particular account of, for they know my mind exactly. Don't reproach we with not meeting you at Paris. Recollect what I suffered this time two years; and if you can have any notion of fear, imagine my dread of torture for five months and a half! When all the quiet of Strawberry did but just carry me through it, could I support it in the noise of a French hotel! and, what would be still worse, exposed to receive all visits? for the French, you know, are never more in public than in the act of death. I am like animals, and love to hide myself *when I am dying*. Thank God, I am now two days beyond the crisis when I expected my dreadful periodic visitant, and begin to grow very sanguine about the virtue of the bootikins. I shall even have courage to go to-morrow to Chalfont for two days, as it is but a journey of two hours. I would not be a day's journey from hence for all lord Clive's diamonds. This will satisfy *you*. I doubt madame du Deffand is not so easily convinced: therefore pray do not drop a hint before her of blaming me for not meeting you; rather assure her you are persuaded it would have been too great a risk for me at this season. I wish to have her quite clear of my attachment to her; but that I do not always find so easy. You, I am sure, will find her all zeal and *empressement* for you and yours. Adieu!

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1774.

I HAVE received your letter of the 23d, and it certainly overpays me, when you thank instead of scolding me, as I feared. A passionate man has very little merit in being in a passion, and is sure of saying many things he repents, as I do. I only hope you think that I could not be so much in the wrong for every body; nor should have been perhaps even for you, if I had not been certain I was the only person, at that moment, that could serve you essentially: and at such a crisis, I am sure I should take exactly the same part again, except in saying some things I did, of which I am ashamed![1] I will say no more now on that topic, nor on any thing relating to it, because I have written my mind very fully, and you will know it soon. I can only tell you now, that I approve extremely your way of thinking, and hope you will not change it before you hear from me, and know some material circumstances. You and lady Ailesbury and I agree exactly, and she and I certainly consider only *you*. I do not answer her last, because I

[1] This relates to Mr. Walpole having resented in a very warm manner, some neglect on the part of his friends, which deprived Mr. Conway of a seat in parliament at the general election, which took place in the year 1774.

could not help telling you how very kindly I take your letter. All I beg is, that you would have no delicacy about my serving you any way. You know it is a pleasure to me: any body else may have views that would embarrass you; and therefore, till you are on the spot, and can judge for yourself (which I always insist on, because you are cooler than I, and because, though I have no interests to serve, I have passions, which equally mislead one), it will be wiser to decline all kind of proposals and offers. You will avoid the plague of contested elections and solicitations: and I see no reasons, at present, that can tempt you to be in a hurry.

You must not expect to be madame du Deffand's first favourite. Lady Ailesbury has made such a progress there, that you will not easily supplant her. I have received volumes in her praise. You have a better chance with madame de C * * * *, who is very agreeable; and I hope you are not such an English husband as not to conform to the manners of Paris while you are there.

I forgot to mention one or two of my favourite objects to lady Ailesbury, nay, I am not sure she will taste one of them, the church of the Celestines. It is crowded with beautiful old tombs: one of Francis II. whose beatitude is presumed from his being husband of the martyr Mary Stuart. Another is of the first wife of John duke of Bedford, the regent of France. I think you

was once there with me formerly. The other is Richelieu's tomb, at the Sorbonne — but that every body is carried to see. The hotel de *Carnavalet*,[2] near the Place Royale, is worth looking at, even for the façade, as you drive by. But of all earthly things the most worth seeing is the house at Versailles, where the king's pictures, not hung up, are kept. There is a treasure past belief, though in sad order, and piled one against another. Monsieur de Guerchy once carried me thither; and you may certainly get leave. At the Luxembourg are some hung up, and one particularly is worth going to see alone: it is the Deluge by Nicolo Poussin, as winter. The three other seasons are good for nothing — but the Deluge is the first picture in the world of its kind. You will be shocked to see the glorious pictures at the Palais Royal transplanted to new canvasses, and new painted and varnished, as if they were to be scenes at the opera — at least, they had treated half a dozen of the best so, three years ago, and were going on. The prince of Monaco has a few fine, but still worse used; one of them shines more than a looking-glass. I fear the exposition of pictures is over for this year; it is generally very *diverting*.[3] I, who went into every church of Paris, can assure you there are few worth it, but the Invalids — except the *scenery* at St.

---

[2] Where madame du Sevigné resided.

[3] He means from their extreme bad taste.

Roch, about one or two o'clock at noon, when the sun shines; the Carmelites, for the Guido and the portrait of madame de la Valiere as a Magdalen; the Val de Grace, for a moment; the *treasure* at Notre Dame; the Sainte Chapelle, where in the anti-chapel are two very large enamelled portraits; the tomb of Condé at the Great Jesuits in the rue St. Antoine, if not shut up; and the little church of St. Louis in the Louvre, where is a fine tomb of cardinal Fleury, but large enough to stand on Salisbury-plain. One thing some of you *must* remember, as you return; nay, it is better to go soon to St. Denis, and madame du Deffand must get you a particular order to be shown (which is never shown without) the effigies of the kings. They are in presses over the treasure which is shown, and where is the glorious antique cameo-cup; but the countenance of Charles IX. is so horrid and remarkable, you would think he had died on the morrow of the St. Barthelemi, and waked full of the recollection. If you love enamels and exquisite medals, get to see the collection of a monsieur d'Henery, who lives in the corner of the street where sir John Lambert lives — I forget its name. There is an old man behind the rue de Colombier, who has a great but bad collection of old French portraits; I delighted in them, but perhaps you would not. *I*, you may be sure, hunted out every thing of that sort. The convent and collection of St. Germain, I mean that over against the hotel du

Parc Royal, is well worth seeing — but I forget names strangely — Oh! delightful! — lord Cholmondeley sends me word he goes to Paris on Monday: I shall send this and my other letter by him. It was him I meant; I knew he was going, and had prepared it.

Pray take care to lock up your papers in a strong box, that nobody can open. They imagine you are at Paris on some commission, and there is no trusting French hotels or servants. America is in a desperate situation. The accounts from the Congress are not expected before the 10th, and expected very warm. I have not time to tell you some manœuvres against them that will make your blood curdle. Write to me when you can by private hands, as I will to you. There are always English passing backwards and forwards.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBURY.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 7, 1774.

I HAVE written such tomes to Mr. Conway, madam, and have so nothing new to write, that I might as well methinks begin and end like the lady to her husband: *Je vous écris parceque je n'ai rien à faire: je finis parceque je n'ai rien à vous dire.* Yes, I have two complaints to make, one of your ladyship, the other of myself. You

tell me nothing of lady Harriet:[1] have you no tongue, or the French no eyes? or are her eyes employed in nothing but seeing? What a vulgar employment for a fine woman's eyes after she is risen from her toilet! I declare I will ask no more questions—What is it to me, whether she is admired or not? I should know how charming she is, though all Europe were blind. I hope I am not to be told by any barbarous nation upon earth what beauty and grace are!

For myself, I am guilty of the gout in my elbow; the left—witness my hand-writing. Whether I caught cold by the deluge in the night, or whether the bootikins like the water of Styx can only preserve the parts they surround, I doubt they have saved me but three weeks, for so long my reckoning has been out. However, as I feel nothing in my feet, I flatter myself that this Pindaric transition will not be a regular ode, but a fragment, the more valuable for being imperfect.

Now for my gazette.—Marriages—Nothing done. Intrigues—More in the political than civil way. Births—Under par since lady B * * * left off breeding. Gaming—Low water. Deaths—Lord Morton, lord Wentworth, duchess Douglas. Election stock—More buyers than sellers. Promotions—Mr. Wilkes as high as he can go—

[1] Lady Harriet Stanhope.

A-propos, he was told lord chancellor intended to signify to him that the king did not approve the city's choice: he replied, "Then I shall signify to his lordship, that I am at least as fit to be lord mayor as he to be lord chancellor." This being more gospel than every thing Mr. Wilkes says, the formal approbation was given.

Mr. Burke has succeeded at Bristol, and sir James Peachey will miscarry in Sussex. But what care you, madam, about our parliament? You will see the *rentrée* of the old one, with songs and epigrams into the bargain. We do not shift our parliaments with so much gaiety. Money in one hand, and abuse in t'other — those are all the arts we know. *Wit and a gamut* I don't believe ever signified a parliament,[2] whatever the glossaries may say; for they never produce pleasantry and harmony. Perhaps you may not taste this Saxon pun, but I know it will make the Antiquarian Society die with laughing.

Expectation hangs on America. The result of the general assembly is expected in four or five days. If one may believe the papers, which one should not believe, the other side of the waterists are not *doux comme des moutons*, and yet we do intend to eat them. I was in town on Monday; the duchess of B * * * graced our loo, and made

[2] *Wetenagemot.*

it as rantipole as a quaker's meeting. *Loois Quinze*,[3] I believe, is arrived by this time, but I fear without *quinze louis*.

Your herb-snuff and the four glasses are lying in my warehouse, but I can hear of no ship going to Paris. You are now at Fontainbleau, but not thinking of Francis I. the queen of Sweden and Monaldeschi. It is terrible that one cannot go to courts that are gone! You have supped with the chevalier de Boufflers: did he act every thing in the world, and sing every thing in the world, and laugh at every thing in the world? Has madame de Cambis sung to you *Sans depit, sans legereté?*[4] Has lord Cholmondeley delivered my pacquet? I hear I have hopes of madame d'Olonne. Gout or no gout, I think I shall be little in town till after Christmas. My elbow makes me bless myself that I am not at Paris. Old age is no such uncomfortable thing, if one gives one's self up to it with a good grace, and don't drag it about

> To midnight dances and the public show.

If one stays quietly in one's own house in the country, and cares for nothing but one's self, scolds one's servants, condemns every thing that

---

[3] This was a cant name given to a lady who was very fond of loo, and who had lost much money at that game.

[4] The first words of a favourite French air.

is new, and recollects how charming a thousand things were formerly that were very disagreeable, one gets over the winters very well, and the summers get over themselves.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

I AM sorry there is still time, my dear lord, to write to you again; and that though there is, I have so little to amuse you with. One is not much nearer news for being within ten miles of London than if in Yorkshire; and besides, whatever reaches us, lady Greenwich catches at the rebound before me, and sends you before I can. Our own circle furnishes very little. Dowagers are good for propagating news when planted, but have done with sending forth suckers. Lady Blandford's coffee-house is removed to town, and the duchess of Newcastle's is little frequented, but by your sister Anne, lady Browne, and me. This morning indeed I was at a very fine concert at old Franks's at Isleworth, and heard Leoni, who pleased me more than any thing I have heard these hundred years. There is a full melancholy melody in his voice, though a *falsetta*, that nothing but a natural voice almost ever compasses. Then he sung songs of Handel in the genuine

simple style, and did not put one in pain like rope-dancers. Of the opera I hear a dismal account; for I did not go to it to sit in our box like an old king dowager by myself. Garrick is treating the town, as it deserves and likes to be treated, with scenes, fire-works, and his own writing. A good new play I never expect to see more, nor have seen since The Provoked Husband, which came out when I was at school.

* * * * is dead, they say by his own hand: I don't know wherefore. I was told it was a great political event. If it is, our politics run as low as our plays. From town I heard that lord Bristol was taken speechless with a stroke of the palsy. If he dies, madam Chudleigh must be tried by her peers, as she is certainly either duchess or countess.

Mr. Conway and his company are so pleased with Paris, that they talk of staying till Christmas. I am glad; for they will certainly be better diverted there than here.

Your lordship's most faithful servant.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 12, 1774.

I HAVE received a delightful letter from you of four sheets, and another since. I shall not reply

to the campaigning part (though much obliged to you for it), because I have twenty other subjects more pressing to talk of. The first is to thank you for your excessive goodness to my dear old friend—she has some indiscretions, and *you must not have any to her;* but she has the best heart in the world, and I am happy, at her great age, that she has spirits enough not to be always upon her guard. A bad heart, especially after long experience, is but too apt to overflow *inwardly* with prudence. At least, as I am but too like her, and have corrected too few of my faults, I would fain persuade myself that some of them flow from a good principle—but I have not time to talk of myself, though you are much too partial to me, and give me an opportunity; yet I shall not take it.

Now for English news, and then your letter again.

There has been a great mortality here; though death has rather been *prié* than a volunteer. * * * *, as I told lady Ailesbury last post, shot himself. He is dead, totally undone. Whether that alone was the cause, or whether he had not done something worse, I doubt. I cannot conceive that, with his resources, he should have been hopeless—and to suspect him of delicacy, impossible!

A ship is arrived from America, and I doubt with very bad news, for none but trifling letters

have yet been given out — but I am here, see nobody that knows any thing, and only hear by accident from people that drop in. The sloop that is to bring the result of the general assembly is not yet come. There are indeed rumours, that both the non-importation and even non-exportation have been decreed; and that the flame is universal. I hope this is exaggerated! yet I am told the stocks will fall very much in a day or two.

I have nothing to tell lady Ailesbury, but that I hear a deplorable account of the opera. There is a new puppet-show at Drury-lane, as fine as scenes can make it, called The Maid of the Oaks, and as dull as the author could not help making it.

Except M. D'Herouville I know all the people you name. C. I doubt by things I have heard formerly, may have been a *concussionnaire*. The duke, your *protecteur*,[1] is *mediocre* enough: you would have been more pleased with his wife. The chevalier's[2] bon-mot is excellent, and so is he. He has as much *bouffonnerie* as the Italians, with more wit and novelty. His impromptu verses

---

[1] The duc de la Valiere; of whom Mr. Conway had said, that, when presented to him, "his reception was what might be called good, but rather *de protection*."

[2] The chevalier de Boufflers.

often admirable. Get madame du Deffand to show you his Embassy to the princess Christine, and his verses on his eldest uncle, beginning, *Si monsieur de Veau.* His second uncle has parts, but they are not so natural. Madame de Caraman is a very good kind of woman, but has not a quarter of her sister's parts. Madame de Mirepoix is *the* agreeable woman of the world, when she pleases — but there must not be a card in the room. Lord * * * * has acted like himself; that is, unlike any body else. You know, I believe, that I think him a very good speaker; but I have little opinion of his judgment and knowledge of the world, and a great opinion of his affectation and insincerity. The abbé Raynal, though he wrote that fine work on the commerce *des deux Indes*, is the most tiresome creature in the world. The first time I met him was at the dull baron d'Olbach's: we were twelve at table: I dreaded opening my mouth in French, before so many people and so many servants: he began questioning me, cross the table, about our colonies, which I understand as I do Coptic. I made him signs I was deaf. After dinner he found I was not, and never forgave me. Mademoiselle Raucoux I never saw till you told me madame du Deffand said she was *demoniaque sans chaleur!* What painting! I see her now. Le Kain sometimes pleased me, oftener not. Molè is charming in genteel, or in pathetic comedy, and would be fine in tragedy, if

he was stronger. Preville is always perfection. I like his wife in affected parts, though not animated enough. There was a delightful woman who did the lady Wishforts, I don't know if there still, I think her name mademoiselle Drouin; and a fat woman, rather elderly, who sometimes acted the *soubrette*. But you have missed the Dumenil, and Caillaut! What irreparable losses! Madame du Deffand, perhaps — I don't know — could obtain your hearing the Clairon — yet the Dumenil was infinitely preferable.

I could now almost find in my heart to laugh at you for liking Boutin's garden.[3] Do you know, that I drew a plan of it, as the completest absurdity I ever saw. What! a river that wriggles at right angles through a stone gutter, with two tansy puddings that were dug out of it, and three or four beds in a row, by a corner of the wall, with samples of grass, corn, and of *en friche*, like a tailor's paper of patterns! And you like this! I will tell Park-place——Oh! I had forgot your audience in dumb show—Well, as madame de Sevigné said, "*Le roi de Prusse, c'est le plus grand roi du monde* still."[4] My love to the old parliament: I don't love new ones.

---

3 See another ludicrous description of this garden in a letter to Mr. Chute.

4 This alludes to Mr. Conway's presentation to the king of

I went several times to madame de Monconseil's, who is just what you say. Mesdames de Tingri et de la Vauguion I never saw: madame de Noailles once or twice, and enough. You say something of madame Mallet, which I could not read; for, by the way, your brother and I agree that you are grown not to write legibly: is that lady in being? I knew her formerly. Madame de Blot I know, and monsieur de Paulmy I know, but for heaven's sake who is col. Conway?[5] Mademoiselle Sanadon is *la sana donna*, and not mademoiselle *Celadon*,[6] as you call her. Pray assure my good monsieur Schoualow of my great regard: he is one of the best of beings.

I have said all I could, at least all I should. I

France, Louis XVI. at Fontainbleau, of which in his letter to Mr. Walpole he gives the following account.

"On St. Hubert's day in the morning I had the honour of being presented to the king: 'twas a good day and an excellent deed. You may be sure I was well received, the French are so polite! and their court so polished!—The emperor indeed talked to me every day; so did the king of Prussia regularly and much: but that was not to be compared to the extraordinary reception of his most Christian majesty, who, when I was presented, did not stop, nor look to see what sort of an animal was offered to his notice, but carried his head as it seemed somewhat higher, and passed his way."

[5] An officer in the French service.

[6] Mademoiselle Sanadon, a lady who lived with madame du Deffand.

reserve the rest of my paper for a postscript; for this is but Saturday, and my letter cannot depart till Tuesday: but I could not for one minute defer answering your charming volumes, which interest me so much. I grieve for lady Harriet's[7] swelled face, and wish for both their sakes she could transfer it to her father. I assure her I meant nothing by desiring you to see the verses to the princess Christine,[8] wherein there is very profane mention of a pair of swelled cheeks. I hear nothing of madame d'Olonne.[9]—Oh! make madame du Deffand show you the sweet portrait of madame de Prie, the duke of Bourbon's mistress. Have you seen madame de Monaco, and the remains of madame de Brionne? If you wish to see Mrs. A * * *, ask for the princesse de Ligne. If you have seen monsieur de Maurepas, you have seen the late lord Hardwicke.[10] By your not naming him, I suppose the duc de Nivernois is not at Paris. Say a great deal for me to M. de Guisnes. You will not see my passion, the duchess de Chatillon. If you see madame de Nivernois, you will think the duke of Newcastle is come to life again. Alas! where is my postscript?

---

7 Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to lord Foley, was at this time at Paris with her father the earl of Harrington.

8 By the chevalier de Boufflers.

9 A beautiful enamel miniature of madame d'Olonne.

10 He means from their personal resemblance.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Nov. 27, 1774.

I HAVE received your delightfully plump packet with a letter of six pages, one from madame du Deffand, the Eloges, and the *Lit de justice*. Now observe my gratitude: I appoint you my resident at Paris; but you are not to resemble all our ministers abroad, and expect to live at home, which would destroy *my lord Castlecomer's*[1] view in your staying at Paris. However, to prove to you that I have some gratitude that is not totally selfish, I will tell you what little news I know, before I answer your letter; for English news, to be sure, is the most agreeable circumstance in a letter from England.

On my coming to town yesterday, there was nothing but more deaths—don't you think we have the plague? the bishop of Worcester, lord Bread-albane, lord Strathmore. The first fell from his horse, or with his horse, at Bath, and the bishopric was incontinently given to bishop North.

America is still more refractory, and I doubt will outvote the ministry. They have picked general Gage's pocket of three pieces of cannon, and intercepted some troops that were going to him. Sir William Draper is writing plans of pacification

[1] A cant phrase of Mr. Walpole's.

in our newspapers; and lord Chatham flatters himself that he shall be sent for when the patient is given over; which I don't think at all unlikely to happen. My poor nephew is very political too: so we shall not want mad-doctors. *A-propos*, I hear Wilkes says he will propose M * * * * for speaker.

The ecclesiastical court are come to a resolution that the duchess of Kingston is Mrs. Hervey; and the sentence will be public in a fortnight. It is not so certain that she will lose the estate. Augustus[2] is not in a much more pleasant predicament than she is. I saw lord Bristol last night: he looks perfectly well, but his speech is much affected, and his right hand.

Lady Lyttelton, who, you know, never hears any thing that has happened, wrote to me two days ago, to ask if it would not be necessary for *you* to come over for the meeting of the parliament. I answered, very gravely, that to be sure you ought: but though *sir James Morgan* threatened you loudly with a petition, yet, as it could not be heard till after Christmas, I was afraid you would not be persuaded to come sooner. I hope she will inquire who *sir James Morgan* is, and that people will persuade her she has made a confusion about sir James * * * *. Now for your letter.

---

[2] Augustus Hervey, to whom she was first married.

I have been in the chambre de parlement, I think they call it the grande chambre; and was shown the corner in which the monarchs sit, and do not wonder you did not guess where it was they sat. It is just like the dark corner, under the window, where I always sat in the house of commons. What has happened, has past exactly according to my ideas. When one king breaks one parliament, and another another, what can the result be but despotism? or of what else is it a proof? If a Tory king displaces his father's Whig lord chamberlain, neither lord chamberlain has the more or the less power over the theatres and court mournings and birth-day balls. All that can arrive is, that the people will be still more attached to the old parliament, from this seeming restitution of a right—but the people must have some power before their attachment can signify a straw. The old parliament too may some time or other give itself more airs on this confession of right; but that too cannot be but in a minority, or when the power of the crown is lessened by reasons that have nothing to do with the parliament. I will answer for it, they will be too *grateful* to give umbrage to their restorer. Indeed I did not think the people would be so quick-sighted at once, as to see the distinction of old and new was without a difference. Methinks France and England are like the land and the sea; one gets a little sense when the other loses it.

I am quite satisfied with all you tell me about my friend. My intention is certainly to see her again, if I am able; but I am too old to lay plans, especially when it depends on the despot gout to register or cancel them. It is even melancholy to see her, when it will probably be but once more; and still more melancholy, when we ought to say to one another, in a different sense from the common, *à revoir!* However, as mine is a pretty cheerful kind of philosophy, I think the best way is to think of dying, but to talk and act as if one was not to die; or else one tires other people, and dies before one's time. I have truly all the affection and attachment for her that she deserves from me, or I should not be so very thankful as I am for your kindness to her. The Choiseuls will certainly return at Christmas, and will make her life much more agreeable. The duchess has as much attention to her as I could have; but that will not keep me from making her a visit.

I have only seen, not known, the younger madame de Boufflers. For her musical talents, I am little worthy of them—yet I am just going to lady Bingham's to hear the Bastardella, whom, though the first singer in Italy, Mrs. Yates could not or would not agree with;[3] and she is to have twelve hundred pounds for singing twelve times at the

[3] To sing at the opera.

Pantheon, where, if she had a voice as loud as lord Clare's, she could not be heard. The two bons-mots you sent me are excellent; but, alas! I had heard them both before: consequently your own, which is very good too, pleased me much more. M. de Stainville I think you will not like: he has sense, but has a dry military harshness, that at least did not suit me—and then I hate his barbarity to his wife.[4]

You was very lucky indeed to get one of the sixty tickets.[5] Upon the whole, your travels have been very fortunate, and the few mortifications amply compensated. If a duke[6] has been spiteful when your back was turned, a hero-king has been all courtesy. If another king has been silent, an emperor has been singularly gracious. Frowns or silence may happen to any body: the smiles have been addressed to you particularly.—So was the ducal frown indeed—but would you have earned a smile at the price set on it? One cannot do right and be always applauded—but in such cases are not frowns tantamount?

As my letter will not set forth till the day after

---

[4] Upon a suspicion of gallantry, she was confined for life.

[5] To see the *lit de justice* held by Louis XVI. when he recalled the parliament of Paris banished by Louis XV. at the instigation of the chancellor Maupou, and suppressed the new one of their creation.

[6] The duke de Choiseul.

to-morrow, I reserve the rest for any additional news, and this time *will* reserve it.

St. Parliament's day, 29th, after breakfast.

THE speech is said to be firm, and to talk of the *rebellion* of our province of Massachusets. No sloop is yet arrived to tell us how to call the rest. Mr. Van is to move for the expulsion of Wilkes; which will distress, and may produce an odd scene. Lord Holland is certainly dead; the papers say, Robinson too, but that I don't know:—so many deaths of late make report kill to right and left.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Dec. 15, 1774.

As I wrote to lady Ailesbury but on Tuesday, I should not have followed it so soon with this, if I had nothing to tell you but of myself. My gouts are never dangerous, and the shades of them not important. However, to dispatch this article at once, I will tell you, that the pain I felt yesterday in my elbow made me think all former pain did not deserve the name. Happily the torture did not last above two hours; and, which is more surprising, it is all the real pain I have felt; for

though my hand has been as sore as if flayed, and that both feet are lame, the bootikins demonstrably prevent or extract the sting of it, and I see no reason not to expect to get out in a fortnight more. Surely, if I am laid up but one month in two years, instead of five or six, I have reason to think the bootikins sent from heaven.

The long expected sloop is arrived at last, and is indeed a *man of war!* The general congress have voted,

A non-importation.

A non-exportation.

A non-consumption.

That, in case of hostilities committed by the troops at Boston, the several provinces will march to the assistance of their countrymen.

That the cargoes of ships now at sea shall be sold on their arrival, and the money arising thence given to the poor at Boston.

That a letter, in the nature of a petition of rights, shall be sent to the king; another to the house of *commons;* a third to the people of England; a demand of repeal of all the acts of parliament affecting North America passed during this reign, as also of the Quebec-bill: and these resolutions not to be altered till such repeal is obtained.

Well, I believe you do not regret being neither in parliament nor in administration! As you are

an idle man, and have nothing else to do, you may sit down and tell one a remedy for all this. Perhaps you will give yourself airs, and say you was a prophet, and that prophets are not honoured in their own country. — Yet, if you have any inspiration about you, I assure you it will be of great service — we are at our wit's end — which was no great journey. — Oh! you conclude lord Chatham's crutch will be supposed a wand, and be sent for. — They might as well send for *my* crutch; and they should not have it; the stile is a little too high to help them over. His lordship is a little fitter for raising a storm than laying one, and of late seems to have lost both virtues. The Americans at least have acted like men, gone to the bottom at once, and set the whole upon the whole. Our conduct has been that of pert children: we have thrown a pebble at a mastiff, and are surprised it was not frightened. Now we must be worried by it, or must kill the guardian of the house, which will be plundered the moment little master has nothing but the old nurse to defend it. But I have done with reflections; you will be fuller of them than I.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Dec. 26, 1774.

I BEGIN my letter to-day, to prevent the fatigue of dictating two to-morrow. In the first and best place, I am very near recovered; that is, though still a mummy, I have no pain left, nor scarce any sensation of gout except in my right hand, which is still in complexion and shape a lobster's claw. Now, unless any body can prove to me that three weeks are longer than five months and a half, they will hardly convince me that the bootikins are not a cure for fits of the gout, and a very short cure, though they cannot prevent it: nor perhaps is it to be wished they should; for if the gout prevents every thing else, would not one have something that does? I have but one single doubt left about the bootikins, which is, whether they do not weaken my breast: but as I am sensible that my own spirits do half the mischief, and that, if I could have held my tongue, and kept from talking and dictating letters, I should not have been half so bad as I have been, there remains but half due to bootikins on the balance: and surely the ravages of the last long fit, and two years more in age, ought to make another deduction. Indeed, my forcing myself to dictate my last letter to you almost killed me; and since the gout is not dangerous to me if I am kept perfectly quiet, my good

old friend must have patience, and not insist upon letters from me but when it is quite easy to me to send them. So much for me and my gout. I will now endeavour to answer such parts of your last letters as I can in this manner, and considering how difficult it is to read *your* writing in a dark room.

I have not yet been able to look into the French harangues you sent me. Voltaire's verses to Robert Covelle are not only very bad, but very contemptible.

I am delighted with all the honours you receive, and with all the amusements they procure you, which is the best part of honours. For the glorious part, I am always like the man in Pope's Donne,

"Then happy he who shows the tombs, said I."

That is, they are least troublesome there. The *serenissime*[1] you met at Montmorency is one of the least to my taste; we quarrelled about Rousseau, and I never went near him after my first journey. Madame du D. will tell you the story, if she has not forgotten it.

It is supposed here, that the new proceedings of the French parliament will produce great effects: I don't suppose any such thing. What America

---

[1] The prince de Conti.

will produce I know still less; but certainly something very serious. The merchants have summoned a meeting for the second of next month, and the petition from the congress to the king is arrived. The heads have been shown to lord D * * * *; but I hear one of the agents is against presenting it: yet it is thought it will be delivered, and then be ordered to be laid before parliament. The whole affair has already been talked of there on the army and navy-days; and Burke, they say, has shone with amazing wit and ridicule on the late inactivity of Gage, and his losing his cannon and straw; on his being entrenched in a town with an army of observation; with that army being, as sir William Meredith had said, an asylum for magistrates, and to secure the port. Burke said, he had heard of an asylum for debtors and whores, never for magistrates; and of ships, never of armies, securing a port. This is all there has been in parliament, but elections. C * * * F * * * *'s place did not come into question. Mr. * * * *, who is one of the new elect, has opened, but with no success. There is a seaman, Luttrell, that promises much better.

I am glad you like the duchess de Lauzun:[2]

---

[2] She became duchesse de Biron upon the death of her husband's grandfather, the marechal duc de Biron, and perished, on the scaffold, during the tyranny of Robespierre.

she is one of my favourites. The hotel du Chatelet promised to be very fine, but was not finished when I was last at Paris. I was much pleased with the person that slept against St. Lambert's poem: I wish I had thought of the nostrum, when Mr. * * *, a thousand years ago, at Lyons, would read an epic poem to me just as I had received a dozen letters from England. St. Lambert is a great jackanapes, and a very tiny genius. I suppose the poem was The Seasons, which is four fans spun out into a Georgic.

If I had not been too ill, I should have thought of bidding you hear midnight mass on Christmas-eve in madame du Deffand's tribune, as I used to do. To be sure, you know that her apartment was part of madame du Montespan's, whose arms are on the back of the grate in madame du Deffand's own bed-chamber, *A propos*, ask her to show you madame de Prie's picture, M. le Duc's mistress — I am very fond of it — and make her tell you her history.

I have but two or three words more. Remember my parcel of letters from madame du D. and pray remember this injunction, not to ruin yourselves in bringing presents. A very slight fairing of a guinea or two obliges as much, is more fashionable, and not a moment sooner forgotten than a magnificent one; and then you may very cheaply oblige the more persons: but as the sick

fox, in Gay's Fables, says (for one always excepts oneself),

"A chicken too might do me good ——"

I allow you to go as far as three or even five guineas for a snuff-box for me: and then, as * * * * * * * * told the king, when he asked for the reversion of the Light-house for two lives, and the king reproached him with having always advised him against granting reversions; he replied, "Oh sir, but if your majesty will give me this, I will take care you shall never give away another."

Adieu, with my own left hand,

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Dec. 31, 1774.

No child was ever so delighted to go into breeches, as I was this morning to get on a pair of cloth shoes as big as Jack Harris's: this joy may be the spirits of dotage—but what signifies whence one is happy? Observe too that this is written with my own *right* hand, with the bootikin actually upon it, which has no distinction of fingers: so I no longer see any miracle in Buckinger, who

was famous for writing without hands or *feet* [as if it was indifferent which one uses, provided one has a pair of either]. Take notice, I write so much better without fingers than with, that I advise *you* to try a bootikin. To be sure, the operation is a little slower; but to a prisoner, the duration of his amusement is of far more consequence than the vivacity of it.

Last night I received your very kind, I might say *your* letter *tout court*, of Christmas-day. By this time I trust you are quite out of pain about me. My fit has been as regular as possible; only, as if the bootikins were post-horses, it made the grand tour of all my limbs in three weeks. If it will always use the same expedition, I am content it should take the journey once in two years. You must not mind my breast: it was always the weakest part of a very weak system; yet did not suffer now by the gout, but in consequence of it; and would not have been near so bad, if I could have kept from talking and dictating letters. The moment I am out of pain I am in high spirits; and though I never take any medicines, there is one thing absolutely necessary to be put into my mouth — a gag. At present the town is so empty that my tongue is a sinecure.

I am well acquainted with the Bibliotheque du Roi, and the medals, and the prints. I spent an entire day in looking over the English portraits, and kept the librarian without his dinner till dark

night, till I was satisfied. Though the Choiseuls [1] will not *acquaint* with you, I hope their abbé Barthelemi [2] is not put under the same quarantine. Besides great learning, he has infinite wit and *polissonnerie*, and is one of the best kind of men in the world. As to the grandpapa,[3] *il ne nous aime pas nous autres*, and has never forgiven lord Chatham. Though exceedingly agreeable himself, I don't think his taste exquisite. — Perhaps I was piqued; but he seemed to like * * * better than any of us. Indeed I am a little afraid that my dear friend's impetuous zeal may have been a little too prompt in pressing you upon them. *d'abord:* — but don't say a word of this — it is her great goodness. — I thank you a million of times for all yours to her: — she is perfectly grateful for it.

The chevalier's [4] verses are pretty enough. I own I like Saurin's [5] much better than you seem.

---

[1] Mr. Conway and the ladies of his party had met with the most flattering and distinguished reception at Paris from every body but the duc and duchesse de Choiseul, who rather seemed to decline their acquaintance.

[2] The author of the Voyage du jeune Anacharsis.

[3] A name given to the duc de Choiseul by madame du Deffand.

[4] Verses written by the Chevalier de Boufflers, to be presented by madame du Deffand to the duke and duchess of Choiseul.

[5] They were addressed to Mr. de Malesherbes, then premier president de la cour des aides.

to do. Perhaps I am prejudiced by the curse on the chancellor at the end.

Not a word of news here. In a sick room one hears all there is, but I have not heard even a lie: but as this will not set out these three days, it is to be hoped some charitable Christian will tell a body one. Lately indeed we heard that the king of Spain had abdicated; but I believe it was some stock-jobber that had deposed him.

Lord George Cavendish, for my solace in my retirement, has given me a book, the History of his own Furness-abbey, written by a Scotch ex-Jesuit. I cannot say that this unnatural conjunction of a Cavendish and a Jesuit has produced a lively colt; but I found one passage worth any money. It is in an extract of a constable's journal kept during the civil war; and ends thus: "And there was never heard of such troublesome and distracted times as these five years have been, *but especially for constables.*" It is so natural, that *inconvenient to my lord Castlecomer* is scarce a better proverb.

Pray tell lady Ailesbury that though she has been so very good to me, I address my letters to you rather than to her, because my pen is not always upon its guard, but is apt to say whatever comes into its nib; and then if she peeps over your shoulder, I am *censé* not to know it. Lady Harriet's wishes have done me great good: nothing but a father's gout could be obdurate enough

to resist them. My Mrs. D. says nothing to me; but I give her intentions credit, and lay her silence on you.

January 1, 1775; and a happy new year!

I WALK! I walk! walk alone!—I have been five times quite round my rooms to-day, and my month is not up! The day after to-morrow I shall go down into the dining-room; the next week to take the air; and then if Mrs. * * * * is very pressing, why, I don't know what may happen. Well! but you want news — there are none to be had. They think there is a ship lost with Gage's dispatches. Lady Temple gives all her diamonds to miss Nugent. Lord Pigot lost 400 pounds the other night at princess Amelia's. Miss Davis has carried her cause against Mrs. Yates, and is to sing again at the opera. This is all my coffee-house furnished this morning.

TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

Arlington-street, Jan. 9, 1775.

I EVERY day intended to thank you for the copy of Nel Gwyn's letter, till it was too late; the gout came, and made me moult my goose quill. The letter is very curious, and I am as well content as with the original.

It is lucky you do not care for news more recent than the Reformation. I should have none to tell you; nay, nor earlier neither. Mr. Strut's second volume I suppose you have seen. He shewed me two or three much better drawings from pictures in the possession of Mr. Ives. One of them made me very happy: it is a genuine portrait of Humphry, duke of Gloucester, and is the individual same face as that I guessed to be his in my marriage of Henry VI. They are infinitely more like each other, than any two modern portraits of one person by different painters. I have been laughed at for thinking the skull of duke Humphrey at St. Alban's proved my guess; and yet it certainly does, and is the more like, as the two portraits represent him very bald, with only a ringlet of hair, as monks have. Mr. Strut is going to engrave his drawings.

Yours faithfully.

END OF VOL. III.

Printed by T. Davison, Whitefriars.

00093780

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 03 December, 2015